Moral Evil.

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MORAL EVIL

ITS NATURE AND ORIGIN

By L. B. WILKES.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY J. H. GARRISON.

"*The Wages of Sin is Death.*"—ROM. 6:23.

ST. LOUIS:
CHRISTIAN PUBLISHING COMPANY,
1892.

5-2422X

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PREFACE.

EVERYTHING else being equal, that man is strongest for virtue and against vice who is most widely learned.

There are some truths that some persons ought not to know. One who is walking a wire a hundred feet from the ground is, no doubt, in danger of falling, but it is better, for the time, that he should not know it. There are many cases that will readily occur to the mind of the reader in which "ignorance is bliss." Nevertheless, our proposition, that he is surest for virtue and against vice who is best informed, other things being equal, is true.

Light, physical, intellectual and spiritual, makes for strength and life. Darkness is, in the respects mentioned, a portent of weakness and of death.

When I speak of wide learning and broad culture I do not mean to include certain

branches of learning to the exclusion or neglect of any others. All truth is one, and truth on all subjects is one. All truth is light, and all light is strength and life.

As no one man can know all things, or, as no man is God; and, as some certain learning is better adapted to certain persons than other kinds of learning would be, it is not best that any one should attempt to study everything. Wise, therefore, is he who selects for himself that course of study which best equips him for the work which he proposes to do. It is, however, still true that he who knows most is, as a rule, best qualified for either virtue or vice.

Man is one and yet he is many. He is a complex unit. He is strongest for virtue and against vice when he is educated on all of his sides, or, in respect to every part of his complex being.

A merely physical education, though of great importance to any man in whatever sphere or department of work he may be, develops the brute nature that is in him; only this, nothing more. That is, it makes out of him all the

brute that there is in him. This, for him, *as a brute*, would be a good and correct thing to do. Still the *man himself* and the society in which he lives are both the worse for his brute education with its consequents. He is a slugger.

Of course, one *may be*, by proper training, well developed physically, and still be a refined, cultured gentleman. But this is possible only where the education does not stop with mere physical culture. The wrong and the resulting evil, in the case supposed, is not in the fact of fine physical development, but in the lack of something more. This, it was well to have done, but that should not have been left undone. "A little learning is a dangerous thing," is not a late untested discovery.

The steam engine had better not have the capacity of 2,000 horses than, having it, not to be under mental and moral control, or guidance. So, if one, called a man, is to be practically a brute, it were better that he should not be a *mighty* brute.

If one is to be intellectual, but not moral or

spiritual, the less intellectual learning and culture he has the better. The more intellectual culture a man has the better, provided the intellect and its culture are thoroughly sanctified to high moral and spiritual ends. But where such cultured intellect is not so sanctified, the less it is educated the better.

The people of these United States are bent upon a desperate experiment in giving intellectual education, often quite extensive, to all the children of the land without stopping to ask what they intend to do with it. It is not, by any means, yet shown that, in educating the intellects of our children as we are doing, and neglecting and more than neglecting their moral and spiritual natures, we are not sowing the seeds of a most destructive cyclone of anarchy in the end, and the end not far in the future.

Is it said: The government must not teach morals nor religion? Whatever may be true on this point, let the question be raised. On what ground does the government feel it a duty to educate the children of the country at all?

Is education, as we have it, a function, proper, of our government? If the answer be no, then the whole question is settled. But if the answer should be yes, then I insist that the government's curriculum of study shall be in harmony with the natures of those whom it undertakes to educate. If what is to be educated is physical only, then let the education be adapted to that nature. If it be physical and intellectual, let the education be both, also; and let it be the latter especially, as it is, manifestly, the more important of the two. But, if it be physical, intellectual *and moral*, as it is, then let the education be such as is adapted to, or is inclusive of, the whole unit, the whole complex man. Surely, the most important part of the government's pupil ought not to be neglected. Indeed, this most important, this highest nature in the pupil, *cannot*, with reason, or with safety to society, be neglected long.

Whenever the public conscience has come to rest easy under a regime that dismantles man of that which especially characterizes him as

man, and therefore reduces him to a mere wreck of the man he was intended to be, the end of all desirable, enjoyable civil society is not far away. It surely would be a difficult thing to prove that a government owes the child the education of its lower natures, but not its highest.

The track of such an attempt at argument as is here contemplated, is as devious as that of a serpent.

Is it said that the government educates the child on the plea of self-protection? that the child is of more service to society, and is less dangerous, when educated than when not educated? But, is the conclusion herein true? An educated knave is more dangerous than one who is not. Nor is it true that an education that is *merely physical and intellectual* has any tendency to make people moral or religious. God has decreed that everything shall bring forth after its kind. A strictly physical or intellectual education may make one a physical or an intellectual giant, but it makes him this only. Morally, he is the same that he

was; and so he must remain until he is instructed in moral things. It is not reason nor is it yet demonstrated to be a fact that an educated people, where the moral nature is untaught, undeveloped, are apter to be harmless and useful than those who are not.

But my purpose here and now is, only, to preface the following treatise on "MORAL EVIL."

If the moral nature of man be his highest endowment, as I suppose it is, then surely the impulse that leads one to investigate the very difficult subject of moral evil is a good one. Some of the questions which I have attempted to discuss are, confessedly, very difficult. The hope of reaching conclusions on all of them, which shall be satisfactory to every one, is not entertained. Much of the territory attempted to be explored lies in very high mental and moral latitudes, and some of it borders close upon the limits of intellectual and spiritual thinking.

There are, however, many respects in which the subject of Moral Evil may be treated intel-

ligibly and profitably, and it is confidently hoped that a creditable proportion of the following investigations will be allowed to belong to this class.

If the reader should now and then find statements made, arguments attempted or conclusions supposed to have been reached which he cannot accept, or that he must reject, it may, nevertheless, be that our effort shall provoke a re-examination and a better understanding of the subjects treated, or of some of them, than was had before. In that case our labor is not wholly lost.

The scope of our investigations may be inferred, to some extent, from the following analysis:

1. What is, and What is the Origin of, Moral Evil?
2. Who is the Author of Moral Evil?
3. Will Moral Evil Have an End?

L. B. WILKES.

Stockton, Cal., May 4, 1892.

INTRODUCTION.

WHENEVER an earnest, thoughtful mind confronts squarely any one of the great problems of life, and grapples with it honestly and fearlessly, he challenges the attention of all sober minds. The problem herein discussed is one that has claimed the attention of the ablest men of all time. It has thrown its dark shadow of mystery across the lives of unnumbered millions of rational souls, from the crime of Cain to the present hour. Its complete and satisfactory solution has baffled the wisdom of philosopher and theologian, rationalist and mystic. And this, for the reason suggested by the author of this volume, that the lofty theme partakes of the infinite, and we are finite. It cannot be too constantly borne in mind by those who are troubled over unsolved problems, that many of these lie beyond the reach of human reason, at least in our present state. "We know in part and we prophesy in part." Because of this limitation of our knowledge,

"we walk by faith, not by sight." Let us be content to leave some of the mysteries of life for the light of eternity to dissipate, when "that which is perfect is come."

Nevertheless, we do well to grapple earnestly and manfully with the great problems involved in our existence and destiny, and to seek, as far as in us lies, to understand them, and to know their meaning. It is God, Himself, who has planted this impulse within us—this inborn desire to push back the borders of the unknown, and to attain to wider views of truth. It is only when the eager desire to compass and classify all knowledge leads the soul to discard as truth what it cannot verify or comprehend, thus denying to faith its legitimate province, that this natural impulse degenerates into a boastful sciolism. The reverent spirit manifested by the author of this volume, as he cautiously approaches his conclusions along the lines of Scripture and logic, well befits so grave a theme, and is worthy of commendation. The reader may not be able to accept all his interpretations or conclusions, but he cannot but feel that the author himself has not reached them without an honest, pains-taking effort to know the truth. Nor do we see how those who accept his premises—the supreme author-

ity of the Scriptures on this and all other moral problems—can avoid reaching the same conclusions in the cardinal and essential features of the argument. In locating sin in the human will, that is in the choice of evil, in finding the origin of sin in the abuse of moral freedom, in rejecting the Predestinarian theory as a solution of the problem, in making the cessation of punishment depend on repentance, in the future state, in pointing out the danger of moral fixedness in evil so that repentance is not possible, and in emphasizing the will as the decisive factor in this problem of the termination of evil, the author seems to us to rest upon the impregnable basis of truth as taught in the Scriptures and corroborated by the highest reason. The recognition of the human will in its relation to the divine will, may be said to be a distinguishing characteristic of this work. It is this feature, more than any other, that gives the present volume a decided advantage over many other treatises on this subject.

It will no doubt be felt by some that the author's conclusion leaves a very dark picture of human destiny before the mind, so far as those dying impenitent are concerned. This is true, but the author's object, it is evident,

was not to draw a pleasing picture of the destiny of the unsaved, but to present the teaching of God's word upon the subject. The discussion is mainly concerned with those who in this life reject the gospel and harden their hearts to all its tender pleadings. That those who have never heard the gospel will not be judged by it, is the author's reasonable conclusion. There is one phase of the problem of moral evil which the author does not treat, at least directly. It is the theory advanced in what has come to be known as the New Theology. This theory claims that since Christ, as the revelation of the Father, is the highest and strongest appeal which God can make to a human soul, and since millions die without ever having heard of Christ, and therefore without having been appealed to by the highest motive to virtue, these, too, must have Christ offered to them before their destiny can be decisively fixed. It is not held that all these will certainly accept Christ, but it is argued that God could not in justice, and therefore would not condemn to punishment, or leave in an unsaved state, those who might be won by the offer of Christ; and that until Divine Love has put forth its highest effort to win a soul to God, its destiny is not determined.

This, in brief, is the contention of that new school of thought which has risen within the Old Predestinarian fold. That it is an advance on the old theory of consignment to everlasting punishment because of an eternal decree which has no reference to the moral condition of those thus consigned, the writer at least will not deny. Moreover, not a few devout souls take refuge in this view in the presence of the dark problem of the destiny of by far the larger part of our race who leave this world without ever having heard of the love of God as revealed in Christ. While admitting the paucity of direct Scripture teaching in support of this theory, may we not hold it as one of the open questions to be decided, if at all, in the light of that wider knowledge of God's will and way which is sure to come in the future? May we not well hesitate to dogmatize, with too great certainty, on a question concerning which the Bible, if not silent, speaks in language of doubtful import?

But having said this, I wish to express my appreciation of the able and scholarly argument of the distinguished author whose close and clear thinking, and whose faithful adherence to the inspired word make this work worthy of the careful examination of the most

thoughtful minds. If his interpretation of a passage or two differs somewhat from my own, this fact does not prevent my cordial approval of the general conclusions he has reached. I wish I could see scriptural ground for hope that moral evil will have an end. This would seem to be an ideal consummation of Christ's mission. But, like the author, looking all the facts full in the face, including Scriptural declarations and human nature as we see it, we confess our inability to find the ground for such a hope. But we need not despair, nor allow our hearts to be dismayed. We may comfort ourselves with the assurance that "God is love," and that "the Lord of the whole earth will do right."

J. H. GARRISON.

ROSE HILL, ST LOUIS, Sept. 15, 1892.

GENERAL SURVEY.

THE PROBLEM OUTLINED.

We are in a world of change. Our fathers are gone and we are going. Here we have no abiding place, no continuing city. We *know* these things are so, whatsoever else may or may not be.

Men pass into view, take their places upon the stage, play a noble or ignoble part, and are gone, soon gone, never to come back. So we see things.

One leaves the stage for about every second of time, or, in round numbers, nearly or quite one hundred thousand every day. This is a terrible truth, recognized and accepted as such by every one who is at the trouble of mak-

ing a very simple calculation. Where do they go? What of them when gone?

Our thought, in its search for them, traverses the pathless skies, pauses at bright Orion, Aldebaran or Sirius, muses at the Pleiades, or, from the Milky Way, pierces the fathomless upper deep in search of our dead. But in answer to our cry of bereavement we receive back only the echo of our bitter complaint. No information or explanation is given us, or can be, aside from Divine *revelation*. All the sciences, arts and histories of the world may be examined rigidly, may be questioned severely, as they have been, but no light is obtained. These sources of information, so richly freighted with blessings of a thousand kinds, for us, on this subject do not speak. Their deliverances are of the earth earthy; they are but dust or ashes. They know nothing, and, hence, can say noth-

ing on the high themes of human origin and destiny. The propositions concerning man's origin and destiny are not from the earth; for, man of himself knows nothing of origins or destinies. Therefore, as the proposition must be from above, the proof must be from heaven also, must be homogeneous with the proposition to be proved. No one knows the Father save the SON and he to whom the SON shall reveal him. So, no one knows the future, or can know it, or the condition of the dead in the future state, except him to whom the Son shall reveal them.

In this life we find ourselves surrounded by sin, and it is in all of us. The bitter effects are seen everywhere. Was it designed by the Maker that it should be so? Did "our Father who is in Heaven" intend that his rational creature,—man—whom he made in his own image, should sin and, therefore, suffer?

1. To suppose that God had no end in view in man's creation, is to suppose that he worked as no intelligent man ever works. This supposition is absurd.

2. To suppose that he intended man's unhappiness, or that human suffering was the end had in view in man's creation, is to reckon God to be worse, perhaps, than the very worst man that has ever lived. This hypothesis is monstrous and inadmissible. I think it will not be denied that God designed man's happiness when he created him, whatever else he may have intended.

If man's happiness was intended, it must be, for the same reason, that he was to be *perfectly* happy. But he is not so. He hungers, thirsts, mourns, weeps, wails, sickens and dies. He yearns for what he has not, and yet feels that he ought to have, and, but for something in the way, would have. This unrest is always and everywhere pres-

ent, *with every one.* Why is this? An enemy hath done this. Is there no means of removing this impediment? no cure for this moral malady?

How sin could be in the world and be the cause of so dire consequences as we see, and this fact be reconciled with our conceptions of God and man, has long been a problem. "Is not God omnipotent? Can he not, then, do whatever he may choose to do, or wish to see done?" These questions being answered in the affirmative, if sin is, it follows that it is by the will of God. But if this be so, then God wills the existence of sin, or, being unwilling that it should be, he was not able to prevent it, and he is not now able to remove it. It is at least true that it was not prevented, nor has it been removed. It is here.

Must we, then, conclude that God is not omnipotent? that he is lacking in respect to one of his attributes essential to the character, and therefore, to

the existence of God? If we should so conclude, it would follow that there is no such thing as sin; for sin is the violation of the law or will of God. But, if there be no God, there can be no law of God to violate, and hence no sin.

When omnipotence is affirmed of God, it is meant, or should be understood to mean, only that there is nothing of a *purely physical character* that he has not the power to do; this and nothing more is meant.

The question of preventing or removing sin is, however, not one of the exertion of physical power. Hence God's omnipotence has nothing to do with the question of the original or continued existence of sin.

It may be asked, Could not God have made man so that he could not have sinned? "Could he not have done a better job?" I suppose no one but an infidel could ask such a question as this. It is blasphemy. Its animus

and purport are to impugn the character of God, else it has none. God could not have made man different from what he did make him. If he had made him so he could not have sinned, he would not have been *man*. If one is not *capable* of sinning, neither is he capable of being righteous, and hence he neither is nor can be fit for heaven or hell. The fact is, God did create many beings not capable of sinning, and we see the fact before us that they are not men.

3. But, if God is able to prevent or to remove sin at his pleasure, and it is not prevented nor banished from the earth, what is the conclusion? This, I suppose: God wills that sin shall be; he wishes it to be and, of course, wills all of its necessary consequences, also. If this be so, then, as before, sin is not possible. For, in that case, if one should perpetrate what we call a sin, it would be no violation of the will of

God, and therefore not a sin. There could be no such thing as righteousness, in the religious sense, either; for righteousness is the doing of right, according to the will of God. But if the will of God be that man must or may sin, then there is no law of righteousness to violate; there is, therefore, no sin in such case. Moreover, it would be a very strange proceeding for a man to bow down in prayer to a being whom he believes is the author of all his sorrows, and give him thanks; to praise and adore him for all his goodness to the children of men!

4. It has been said that if God is really good, and foresaw that men, if created, would suffer, etc., he ought not to have made them, and that he would not. With the case *as it appeared* before the objector, perhaps his conclusion is not very objectionable. But we ought never to attempt to draw conclusions from premises unless we under-

stand them. What all the premises before God were, when he was considering the question of creating man, it is highly probable we do not fully understand. What all the physical, moral and spiritual necessities in God's universe were, on which the question of the creation or non-creation of man would have important bearings, we may not, do not, fully know. Hence such judgments as the one above referred to are rash and impious to the last degree. But God knows the end from the beginning. The facts and bearings of all the realities and necessities in the universes of God were before HIM, and he decided, in view of them all, to create man. Though we may not know all his reasons for what he did, we know the fact. He says that we were made in his image, which, I venture to say, includes the fact of our free moral agency, and excludes, *ex necessitate rei*, the idea of moral necessity. If this be

not so, it seems to me that the image in which we were made is a rather poor one.

I believe there have been, and it may be now are, a few theologians of some distinction who have held that sin is a good thing, that God designed its existence, and that when it has served its purpose God will put an end to it. These persons hold that Adam's sin was intended as, and that it was, a blessing to him and to his posterity. If the Bible be the Word of God and true, this hypothesis is false. God not only forbade the sin in question, but he forbade it with great emphasis.

If he forbade the deed, and yet intended that Adam should perform it, the logical conclusion would be hard on the character of the Author of all mercies. If he only *pretended* to forbid it, whereas he intended Adam should eat of the forbidden fruit, the case is not made any better. In view

of these and other reasons which it is not necessary to recite, I feel safe in saying that sin is in the world. But *how* came it here?

5. Did God design it to be here? I answer, no. (a) I suppose that he did not, from the fact that he forbade it. To say that he designed its existence in the world, is to say that his words in which he forbids sin may rightly contradict his will, which was in his design, that sin should be. This is impossible. If God does not *design* to have done what he says man must or must not do, then he does what Paul says God cannot do, viz.: "It is impossible for God to lie." (b) But suppose God designed that man should sin, what follows? This: Man did not, does not, cannot sin while doing the will of God. As God's design is his will, and as sin is the violation of the will of God, so therefore, in no case, where a man does *what* or *as*

God designed that he should do, does he sin. If it be said that Adam, when he ate the forbidden fruit, did what God expressly told him not to do, and so he sinned, it should be replied that though God did *say* that man must not eat of the forbidden fruit, yet in fact he willed that he should eat of it; and as sin consists in violating the *will*, and not in violating the word of God in which his will is not, if that could be, so, when man ate of the fruit in question, he did not sin. I would, of course, allow that where one violates the *will* of God he sins.

The supposition that God *designed* that sin should be in the world, we have seen, directly contradicts the expressed word of God. If that may be true of any one statement of God in the Bible, it may be true of all of them, for aught we know or can know, so far as I can see. It follows from this, that we have no means of knowing the *will* of God,

on any subject. Thus, all distinctions between sin and righteousness are gone, and we are left as though we had no Bible, "without God and without hope in the world." Indeed, with this view accepted, it is not apparent that either sin or righteousness is a possibility on the part of man. If there be sin at all, it must be, on our present theory, that God is himself its author. This is, of course, impossible.

6. Did God *permit* sin to come into the world? I think he did not. It ought not to be said that one permits what he could not prevent. Is it said that God could have prevented sin? The fact that he did not prevent sin is proof, entirely satisfactory, that he could not do so. Is one shocked at this statement which, to him, seems to limit the power of God? Where no distinction is made between the physical and the moral power of God, the statement that God could not have pre-

vented the birth and continued existence of sin in the world appears, no doubt, blasphemous. But does the objector better the case when he claims that God created, with his own hand, a pure, innocent man in his own image, and then stood by and permitted sin to enter in and ruin his child, whereas he could have easily prevented the calamity, but would not do so?

There are many things that God cannot do. In so saying I put no limitations upon God; I do not narrow the grounds upon which man's profound and infinite obligation and moral ability to worship God rest. The very reverse of this is the truth. To say that God cannot deny himself; to say that he "cannot lie," steal or murder is no defamation, but, rather, the highest possible commendation of his character.

7. Is it said, God could have declined to create man, and thus have pre-

vented sin? It is not certain that sin would not have been, though man had not been created. It might possibly have been, though man had never been. Indeed, it did exist before the creation of man. But how does the querist know that God could have declined to create man? The probabilities are, he could not have declined the said creation. At least, he did make man. This we know. That he had a reason for the deed which outweighed all reasons to the contrary is of course true. Therefore God *could not* have declined to create man and thus prevent the existence of moral evil among men. This point is more fully discussed elsewhere.

THE PREDESTINARIAN SOLUTION.

THERE is a theory that says man was predestined to every certain act of his life; that, without being consulted and with no reference to faith or good works in him he was, before the world was made, destined to life or death. This, if I mistake not, is a fair statement of the case.

On this point I quote a few passages from what is, perhaps, as good an authority as any: "God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." Again: "By the decree of

God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death." "These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." "Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace," etc.

I have made this quotation pretty

lengthy because of its high claims to consideration; and also because I desired to do the distinguished authors of it full justice. Moreover, I am not quite sure that I understand the quotations fully. There are, however, three items of capital importance which seem to be so plainly stated as to leave no room for reasonable doubt. They are: 1. "God, from all eternity, did . . . freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass." 2. . . "Neither is God the author of sin." 3. . . . "Nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away."

Let us look at these statements and find what is their bearing on the question of moral evil.

1. Did God, from all eternity, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass? If the word *ordain*, in this quotation, is to be taken to sig-

nify, appoint or fix, so that whatever deed or thing transpires God is to be understood as having appointed or demanded it, then every deed or event that transpires is the fulfilling of the will of God and is, therefore, not a sin.

If this be so, since God cannot violate his own will, it follows that there is not and cannot be any such thing as sin or moral evil; and so, all inquiries as to its origin, author or end, are made in ignorance.

The austerities of this view of our subject are not lessened by the statement that "God is not the author of sin." Of course he is not. If sin be a violation of the will of God, as it is, he is, of course, not the author of sin; for, no being, God, angel or man, *can violate his own will.* Nor is the situation improved by the declaration, "Nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures." After saying that God did, from all eternity or before the founda-

tion of the world, ordain, or fix unalterably, whatsoever comes to pass, it is no proper apology or explanation to say that he did it so as to "offer no violence" to the feelings, activities, happiness or life of the creature.

2. On the division of our question regarding the origin of moral evil, the deliverance which I have marked two (2) is clear: God is not the author thereof. If it were possible for God to violate his own will, it is not a case made out that God is not the author of sin, provided he did "from all eternity freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass."

There certainly can be no sin unless something comes to pass; and as God did freely and unchangeably ordain all such things, it is not apparent to me that, if there be sin in the world, God is not its author. This particular theme is more fully considered at an-

other place in these pages; so I dismiss it here.

3. It is said: . . . "Nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures," etc. In view of what precedes this assertion, it is hard, if not impossible, to imagine anything more irrational and absurd. To tie one, hand and foot, and then say to him, "Be ye warmed and filled," whereas it is *not possible* for him to do either, is not a reasonable procedure, to say the least. But the authors of this language were good, and, many of them, great men, and therefore, they did not aim to talk nonsense. They could not have meant to say what their language seems fairly to import. Look at this: "Some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain

and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." The "some men and angels" of this extract, "predestinated to everlasting life" and "foreordained to everlasting death," constitute the sum of all the men and angels of all time and of all eternity; for so the phrases signify. This "predestinating" and "foreordaining" unto life and death was done "before the foundation of the world was laid." Not only so, but it was done before men or angels were in existence; and moreover, God did it "out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works . . . in the creature, as conditions or causes, moving him thereunto." Therefore, in the matter of being either saved or lost, I do not see, on this theory, that men or angels have, have had, ever will or can have any option or will. A being —angel or man—that has no will in any matter, cannot therein sin. Nor

do I believe that the siren note,—"Nor is violence offered to the will of the creature,"—will avail to relieve this theory from a logical conclusion most inadmissible and embarrassing: God is the author of sin, or else there is no such thing. According to these data it seems certain that neither men nor angels have sinned. And, as God cannot sin, it follows, as before, there is no such thing as sin in the world; there never was nor can be.

4. But sin is here. Of this fact there is no reasonable doubt. How best may we account for its presence among men? It seems to me that the most rational or the least objectionable way of accounting for it is to suppose that God made man in his own image with a will power of *his own*, capable of acting in this way or not in defiance of God, angels, men, demons, or things present, past, or to come. Every man feels that he has this power; that is,

he has an ineradicable conviction, which I suppose is instinctive or intuitive, that he himself chooses his own course of conduct. Every one feels that if he were bereft of the right and power to do as he himself decides to be his duty, privilege or right to do, his manhood is gone; he is more than an orphan; he is a machine. My friend is no friend of mine, if he is what he is to me by reason of an absolute *compulsion*, *ab extra*, whatever; that is, if he is not my friend of his own uncoerced, unembarrassed, untrammeled will. If man be not entirely free to choose or to refuse, if his acts result not from his own volitions, but from volitions born out of *over-mastering* circumstances or motives, then, as I see things, the terms, gratitude, respect, affection, love, etc., become unmeaning and worship is an impossibility. To make religion a possibility, and heaven attainable, man must be a

free moral agent. No predestination, foreordination, decree, election, Divine prevision, circumstance or motive, must be allowed to despoil man of his birthright to free moral agency; for he is not, in that case, fit for either heaven or perdition.

Again, if man is not a free moral agent he is not a sinner; if he is not a sinner he has no need of a Savior; if he needs no Savior he certainly has none, and therefore, the whole remedial system, Old Testament and New, is human and false. So matters seem to me.

5. But when I assert that the will of man is free, I do not mean that man is *absolutely independent*. He is often beset by gulfs, walls and other physical and intellectual barriers which are overmastering. But I do mean that, within the human sphere, God has not ordained, designed or planned any resisting, restraining, or *controlling*

force over or in the way of man's will power so as to hinder or prevent his act of willing, when performed, from being *his own act.* And besides this, I mean that what God has not done directly, in this respect, he has not done at all.

The fact that man is responsible to a superior for his acts, and for the manner of them, is no contradiction of this view. Indeed, it is on this ground alone that one can be held accountable to a superior for what he does. There is hardly a principle in the territory of mental or moral philosophy better established than that one should not be held as deserving of censure or praise for an act which he could not have avoided.

It is on this ground that an infant or a lunatic is, by unanimous consent, held to be innocent when he takes human life. On this theory one is held to be innocent who destroys a life by

an accident which he could not have avoided. It is on this ground that the hangman is not a murderer. This is the only ground on which society, civil or religious, is possible. It is on this hypothesis that man is of right amenable to law, human or divine. When one trespasses against me and *turns* and says he repents, I am to, and I do, forgive him. This I do for the reason that I find in him now, or I suppose I do, a changed will. If I could for a moment believe that he had made to me an *unwilling* protestation of penitence, I would not, *I could not, forgive him.* No man, whatever his professions to the contrary may be, does or can forgive one who trespasses against him intentionally, unless the trespasser professes, to the conviction of the injured one, a changed will—repentance. Notwithstanding the boundless love and mercy of God, although he knows our frame and remembers

that we are dust, yet, when we sin, he does not, because he cannot, forgive us, unless our will, in regard to loving and serving God, shall be changed. We blame and praise men for, or in view of, their deeds; God judges men according to the deeds done in the body. But this procedure has qualification or explanation. If it should appear that any given man's deeds were not out of a true heart or willing mind, his deeds would avail him nothing.

Where is the ground of my satisfaction when I see my children obeying my expressed wishes? Is it not in the fact that I understand them to do so from a willing that is all their own? If they obey my wishes because they *must*, all beauty and sweetness are gone from their deeds. But when they do my will while the evidence is plain to me that it was *their* will to do my will, then I can, and I was made to, love them. Before an act can possibly

have any merit or demerit in it, in one's mind, he must see or think he sees that the *actor* could have acted in the opposite way. Therefore it must be *possible* that one may be vicious, if it be possible that he may be virtuous. The condition of its being possible for one to be saved is that it is possible that he may be lost. This reasoning applies, of course, to those only whose salvation is conditioned on character.

If one should be brought into court charged with the perpetration of a high crime, though it should be proved that he did the formal act as charged, yet if it appear to the satisfaction of the court that the man did not act of his own volition, but was compelled to the doing by no matter what force outside of his own will, he is at once acquitted. This is true, not of a man or community here and there only, but it is true of men "everywhere and always." The conviction that man is a free moral

agent, which I take to be almost universal, can hardly fail of having much weight in establishing men's minds in our position.

Let those who accept the doctrine of moral necessity, or who deny the free moral agency of man (and no doubt there are some who think they do), be put to the test. Let some one trespass against such an one cruelly and without a just cause, and he at once spontaneously censures him for it. This he could not do, if he did really hold the doctrine of moral necessity as I have explained it. If he had really believed that God did "from all eternity" foreordain whatsoever comes to pass, he could not consistently have censured the trespasser for this one thing that came to pass. If it should be said that I have not explained the doctrine of predestination, foreordination, election, eternal decrees, etc., correctly, I would, in reply, admit that it is possible I

have not. I have said that I did not feel sure of having grasped the ideas of the authors in full and correctly. As I see them, it is certainly more creditable to an expounder to explain them entirely away than to give us any explanation of them that could be allowed to be at all of kin to the things explained.

Now, let this trespasser turn to his injured friend and make it plain to him as holy writ that what he did was not done of his own will, but that it resulted from causes overmastering him, causes which he could not resist or control, and he at once forgives him. Why is this?

In the first instance he blamed him because he thought the man ought not to have done as he did. No matter what his creed was, he acted on the theory that the offender himself had the power to have acted differently. But as soon as he learned that the of-

fender could not have avoided doing as he did, his feeling of resentment was gone.

6. But does not the Bible say that God hardened Pharaoh's heart that he should not let Israel go? It does. The Bible, however, says, in regard to the same matter, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. He that accepts the testimony of a witness in one case must take it in all the witness has to say. He that introduces the Bible to prove that God hardened Pharaoh's heart must accept the testimony of the same witness when it says that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. I find no difficulty in believing both statements. It is taught in the New Testament, quite as plainly as in the Old, that God hardens people's hearts. It is also true that God has, in all the past, softened men's hearts. He is now doing the same things. The gospel, in the work that was being done by Paul in

Macedonia, was a savour of both life and death. It either softened or hardened the hearts of his hearers. I think men's hearts are now often made hard by reason of the power of the Gospel. And, according to a natural law, the greater the force put forth in the preaching of the gospel, if the influence be resisted, the greater is the hardening effect produced.

Now it is, in the Bible, often said that God hardens those hearts which grow hard under the divine means of softening them.

If Pharaoh's heart had been made hard by the direct, irresistible power of God, and in regard to the resisting of said power he was not consulted and had no option, it follows that in no proper sense of the word did he harden his own heart. But it is stated, and is, therefore, a fact in the proper sense of the word, that Pharaoh did himself

harden his own heart; hence, this hypothesis is false.

No heart can be hardened, in any way, except it be guilty of sin. This will be conceded by the reader. Of this sin God cannot be the author, but man certainly is. Therefore, God did not and does not harden the heart of any one, except as he uses means for its betterment, which, being sinfully rejected, the heart is thereby made hard.

If God were the author, wholly the author, of one's heart being made hard, it must needs be by his being the author of that one's sinning, the only means by which that end can be reached. But, as God cannot be the author of the sinning he is, therefore, not the author of one's heart being made hard, except in the sense before explained.

God has *roused up*, and perhaps raised up men, good and bad, through

whom to accomplish his purpose. But in all such cases he sees or foresees that the parties selected are or will be suited to his purposes, which are always good. It cannot be that in such cases he *makes* or *causes* his roused-up or raised-up men, by means of an arbitrary nature, to be either good or bad. There are, no doubt, many things in the spiritual kingdom of God, as we know there are in the physical, that are quite above or beyond our comprehension; but that it is possible for God, even, to make a man either good or bad in respect to his moral character, without the man's consent, fairly obtained and freely given, I do not see; nor can I conceive such an event to be a moral possibility.

The manner of God's making any one heart hard, is the manner of his making all other hearts either soft or hard. It is the same sun that, shining on the the honey softens it, but shining on the

clay hardens it. The current events of the entire remedial system, and especially the recorded facts in the conversions of sinners mentioned in the New Testament, furnish abundant evidence that God softened men's hearts in the time of the apostles by arguments and motives which sinners had the power to accept or to reject, and which some sinners accepted and some rejected.

Read Heb. 3: 7-15, 4: 7 and Psa. 95: 7-11. In these and other like Scriptures the manner in which God hardened men's hearts seems plainly to be this: God spoke to them for their good; they heard his voice, but they would not regard his will; they would have none of his reproofs; they would not have God to reign over them; and so, their hearts were made, or they became, hard.

The foregoing general statements and reflections are, perhaps, sufficient to the readers' minds for the more thorough

and systematic investigation of the subject of Moral Evil, in all of its more important phases, contemplated and attempted in the following pages.

MORAL EVIL—ITS NATURE AND ORIGIN.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITIONS.

1. An inquiry into this question involves the necessity of defining the terms, *moral* and *evil*.

The word *moral* originally signified manners or conduct. His morals were good who did or acted well, and his were bad who acted badly. The word at present designates, not so much the the actions of men as it does the principles of action, or the laws of man's being which determine his conduct. Certain ones of these principles or laws, scientifically arranged or classified, give us moral science. Moral good, then, in its elementary conception, is a principle which if acted out

would result in actual good. Evil is also an elementary idea, and hence may not be analytically defined. But we may think of and talk around it, and so individualize it that it will stand forth in the mind a distinct conception. Evil is the opposite of good, as cold is the opposite of heat, or as light is the opposite of darkness, with this difference: cold is supposed to be the opposite or mere negation of heat, whereas evil is positive, is not simply the absence of good.

Evil may be contemplated as both physical and moral. It is physical when the body only, or any material thing, is injuriously affected; but it is moral when injury is done to the soul. Moral evil, then, when it is and so far as it may be contemplated as a principle giving birth to action, is a principle which, acted out, damages the soul. This principle must sometimes be regarded as evil before it is developed

into an outward act, or even where it is never so developed.

Sentiments, principles or conduct which may be denominated moral, are such as in some way pertain to the conscience. This faculty or power of man's being is, like every other faculty of his nature, connatural and is for a specific purpose. Its function is to cognize the distinct quality in actions which we denominate moral, and to report the fact to consciousness. But the simple possession of a faculty or capacity for discerning good and evil is not, of itself, enough for the purpose. Just as good eyes are not sufficient for the purpose of vision without light, or for perfect vision without pure light, so we must, in order to make moral distinction have that which shall be to the moral sense what light is to the eye—intelligence.

As many things in the physical and intellectual worlds appear to be real

that are not, so many things appear to be morally true that are really false. This fact may be accounted for in one or both of two ways: 1. It may arise from the fact that the faculty itself is impaired from disuse or abuse. 2. It may be that the medium through which the object is seen is insufficient in quantity, or is of bad quality. Adam in the garden could never have had any conception of sin, or of moral evil, if there had been no law enjoining any duty upon him. It is equally true that he could have had no idea of holiness but for some such law. So the condition of its being possible that a man can have the idea of sin, an experience of sin and may suffer the consequences of sin was also the condition of his being holy, and therefore happy. The law was given and man had the conception of sin; it was violated, and he had an experience of sin.

Moral evil may include more than

the term sin does; it certainly includes all that this term does, but I hardly think it includes more. If it does not include more, then, since it does certainly not include less, if we give a definition of sin we give at the same time a definition of moral evil. If it does include more, then, sin is a species of moral evil, and from its definition we have but to subtract the specific difference, and the result is moral evil.

If there be any difference between sin and moral evil we shall now disregard the circumstance, as the purpose we have in view may be accomplished without regard to it. What, then, is sin? "Sin is law-breaking." 1 John 3: 4. Take the word "transgress" or "law-breaking" to signify any infraction of or want of compliance with law, and the definition is complete. It would seem, then, that moral evil is the violation of law.

2. Let us now look at the question

of moral evil a little more sharply. It is self-evident that moral evil is the act of a moral agent. The word act is here taken to include that which is done by either the body or mind. But not every such act is morally evil. It may be morally good. It would seem, then, that the difference between moral evil and moral good consists not in any difference of action, abstractly considered, but rather in the nature or in some circumstance of the act. It is, hence, clear that we cannot show the precise element in which the evil of an act is, without first having before us an analysis of a moral act. What, then, are the elements of a moral act? and in which one of these elements, if in any, does the quality reside? Or, at what point in the process does it take its birth? I will not now say what these elements are, but will allow them to present themselves in natural order as we proceed. Let us suppose there are

$50,000 of gold in the vault of one of our banks. The fact that the gold is there is no ground for thinking any one is either good or bad. Nor is the fact that I know it to be there any just ground for determining my moral character. Neither should the manner or way in which I have learned that the gold is in a certain vault afford grounds for determining me to be either a good or a bad man. The next thing in natural order, after knowing that the gold is in a certain place, is to desire it. This is not wrong. "Desire when conceived brings forth sin." So says the apostle James. Clearly, the desire is not the sin, is not evil. With this agrees my consciousness. I am distinctly aware of a desire for the gold, even while writing this sentence, but I am in the matter without sin. While we must eat and wear, while we must feed and educate our children for God, while it is true that even in the days of

HIM who could make the stones bread or multiply the loaves and fishes, they had a treasury, it cannot be wrong to desire money. I am conscious of a desire for that gold, but I have gone no further than this. Here I pause and scan the secrets of my soul critically; I question it severely. Is there anything wrong? Answer, Nothing.

Next in order, plans, in conception, rise up in my mind by which to obtain the coveted object. I can almost see them as they pass, one by one, into the field of view, where one is held before the mind's eye for a moment and then gives place for another.

1. I might *beg* the officer of the bank to *give* the money to me. But large money holders are frequently covetous men. I have no reason to think he would do so; hence, this conception is dismissed. 2. I might labor for it. But I could never succeed in this way; life is too short. 3.

I might exchange my property for it. But I nave not the property that would bring it, nor would I be materially benefited by the exchange if I had. 4. I might go to the bank, by some means obtain the key, and carry the money off. Now, in fact, all these conceptions have just passed through my mind, and yet I am not conscious of any evil in me therefore. The reader also has these conceptions necessarily in his mind as he reads these lines, and yet he knows that he is not, therefore, any the better or the worse for the fact. I do not believe that any human being could, without outraging his sense of right, with just the premises before him mentioned, but no more, accuse me of any evil or wrong.

Do you say that the fact that I went at a time when the cashier was absent, took the key from its hiding-place, unlocked the door of the safe and carried off the money, must fix

the stain of guilt upon me? I think differently. Suppose the cashier should come into court and testify that he had authorized me to do just what I did, I would, of course, be pronounced innocent. But suppose it should be in evidence that I had done the deed, as above, without the consent and against the will of the owner, would I then be guilty of evil? I think the decision of this question would turn upon the proper decision of some questions not yet before us. It might appear that I was a lunatic, in which case the sentiment of man, universally, is that I am not guilty. Though it might be right to restrain me, it would be wrong to punish me as an evil-doer. Thus it seems that intelligence, or rather intellectual capacity, is one necessary condition of a moral act. Moreover, this intelligence must have a certain extent. The brute is intelligent, but not sufficiently so to render it capable of a

moral act. So all men have decided. Of the required extent of this intelligence we will speak hereafter.

Let us now post up a little. We have then: 1. The gold is in the vault. 2. I believe it is there. 3. I desire it. 4. The conception of a way by which to obtain it is in my mind. 5. I have intellectual capacity enough to see that in performing the act the rights of others will or will not be violated. But would I necessarily see, even with such intellectual capacity, that the rights of others would be violated? I think not. However good the eyes or intellect, we cannot see in the dark. Light is as necessary to seeing as are good eyes, both intellectually and physically. So, it seems to me, Paul teaches in his letter to the Romans (3: 20): "For by law is the knowledge of sin," and, "I had not known sin but by (or through) law." The rights of others can be recognized by one only

through the knowledge of a law that prescribes them. So, I suppose the existence of a law which sets forth the reciprocal rights and obligations growing out of the relations which exist between parties is a necessary element of a moral act, or of one involving the idea of good or evil. Nor do I believe that the mere existence of such a law with the capacity for understanding it, is enough; it must be actually recognized as such a law; or, if not, one must be responsible for the knowledge of it. Still further, the law must appear to be the expressed will of those having right to prescribe law for the parties, or at least the party must be responsible for such knowledge. Hence, 6. The law of some rightful law-giver prescribing the rights of myself and the owner of the gold, is in existence, and I know it, or I am responsible for a knowledge of it. Now for the sake of the greater clearness, I reflect: 1. The gold is in

the vault. 2. I know it is there. 3. I desire it. 4. The conception of an act by which to obtain it is in my mind. 5. I have the capacity for seeing that I would or would not violate the rights of some one, should I execute my plan. 6. The law of some one recognized as having the right to prescribe the rights and duties of myself and of the owner of the gold is in existence and I see it as such law, or I am responsible for seeing it so. In no one of these elements is there moral quality. I do not mean that we could have, in a fully accomplished moral act, the quality sought without them, for we could not, but only that we do not necessarily have it with them. The cloud is a very different thing from the lightning, though it is usually necessary to it.

Now let us consider a conception which, in its execution, would involve us in the violation of the rights of others. Seen in this light, the question

would arise: Shall I perform the act? Suppose the answer is, I will. The will acts. It says yes, or it says no. These two monosyllables are all the words it can utter. Does it say yes? Then I am guilty. Not one man in the world who understands the subject will say that I sinned till this moment; nor will one deny that at this moment I sinned.

For the truth of this statement we are compelled to appeal to consciousness. Having the case fairly and fully stated, let the appeal be made to the consciousness of men, and all that can be done is done. A seventh element then, is will. Nor is the quality in the will, abstractly considered, but it depends upon whether or not the act is to violate the rights of others. The eighth element in a fully accomplished moral act, is the outward performance. These are all the elements of a fully developed moral act, I believe. The quality of the act does not reside in the outward

act. It is always born before it, and therefore without it.

Now it seems to me plain that the thing of which we speak and which we seek is found in or at the act of willing. It may not be precisely correct to say that the quality is *in the will*, nor yet to say that it is *in the act* of willing. It is the *ego* that wills. For doing this it has a capacity or faculty which we should call the faculty of will. It is to this *ego*, and not to its faculty nor to what the faculty does, that the moral quality belongs. But if the question should be as to the *time* of its birth, the answer is: It is cognized at the moment of willing and not before. Strictly speaking, the moral quality is in no element of an act but it is in the actor.

Moral evil, then, seems to be the willing to do that which is wrong or which is in violation of the known or knowable

rights of others. Thus we answer the question, What is moral evil?

CHAPTER II.

AUTHOR OF MORAL EVIL.

THE question, What is the origin of moral evil, I divide into two parts: 1. What is the manner of its origin? 2. Who is its author? The manner of its origin is quite sufficiently discussed in the foregoing arguments for our present purpose.

Let us, then, address ourselves to the investigation of the second division of the question. It seems to me that he who does the willing, in every case in which moral evil arises, is the author thereof. Nor do I believe that any one who is not under the overmastering power of a false psychology or theology can be found that would decide differently. This is certainly true unless the will of the one who does will is under the absolute control of some extraneous

power that determines its decision. Nor do I mean to intimate that if this were the case the fact would alter the conclusion. I suppose it would not.

1. Let the question be raised: Whence the willing? Is the *ego* self-acting, or is it acted? Do I myself will, or am I caused to will? Or state it thus: Is the act of willing mine, or is it the act of another? If it is mine, then *I* may be a sinner; if it is not mine, then I cannot be. In any event, he who does the willing is the actor, and if the act be morally evil, is the evil doer. To this conclusion we are held bond-slaves by the conditions of our being; God made us so, to feel so. But, says the fatalist, the act of willing is not the *ego* self-acting, but it is the *ego* constrained to act. That is, the *ego* acting is an effect following an adequate cause, over which it possesses no controlling power. Or, more briefly and perhaps more clearly, the *ego*

never acts; it is moved by some antecedent and extraneous force, as the apple falls from the tree to the ground by the force of gravity. The assumption upon which this conclusion is based is: no effect can be without an adequate cause; the act of willing is an effect; it must, then, have an adequate cause. The major premise in this syllogism is no doubt true. Assume that any given thing is an effect and it must follow that it had an adequate cause. In the minor premise it is assumed that the act of willing is an effect. This I grant is true. But the real question is not whether the act of willing is an effect, but it is rather, What is the real cause of the act? Says the fatalist, if the act of willing is caused or is an effect, then the will is not free. If by this it be meant that the *act* of willing considered as something distinct from the being that wills, or the actor, is constrained and not free, I grant it. The

absurdity of an act, in the abstract, being a free agent or an agent at all in any sense, is sufficiently apparent, and hence neither needs nor deserves further notice. For the same reason the mere faculty of will, in the abstract, is not a free agent, but only a passive instrument. But if it be meant that the *ego* is itself not free in the act of willing, that it cannot and does not itself will without outside *controlling force*, I deny it. I hold that the act of willing is an effect, and that the cause which produces it is the soul itself, acting without constraint; that we are not to look beyond this for the real efficient actor.

President Edwards, who was the champion of the fatalists' forces in the western continent, after demonstrating what I suppose no one ever denied: "That nothing taketh beginning from itself," proceeds to say that "the will is always determined by the strongest

motive." Now, since the act of willing is the product of that which wills, it follows that this proposition must mean that the "strongest motive" determines what the act in any given case shall be, by absolutely controlling that which does the willing, or by *causing* it to perform that particular act. With the proposition thus understood, I ask, how does any one know that the "strongest motive" controls the will? Is the fact that the will acts, in a certain case, in the direction of something supposed to be a motive, the proof that that motive controlled the will? Is the fact that a certain motive controlled the will proved by the fact that the will acted in the case in the direction of that given motive? Then the whole is the shallow fallacy of arguing in a circle. That is, we are to know that motive controls the will from the fact that *the will is controlled* by the motive. How did the President know but

that the fact that the will acts in the direction of a given motive results from the fact simply that the will-power itself so determined? Clearly, he does not know. May it not be that the will power, or the *ego*, determines the strength of the motive, and not that the motive determines the action of the will? This may be true for aught I can see in the phenomena of our being to the contrary. It certainly does no violence to any psychological principle or fact known to philosophy to suppose this to be true.

2. But I think there are stubborn facts directly and fatally against the President's position.

It seems to me that I have often been conscious of successful efforts made by my soul to resist the influence of things called motives, that I have dismissed some and called up others, which after being duly considered, were in turn dismissed; that I did finally *myself* de-

termine the direction of my action. If this be true, and I see not that it could be false, then the hypothesis that motive controls the will is false. But, says the objector, there is some reason in every case for the choice which a man makes, and that reason lies out in the territory of the non *ego*. It is thought that, therefore, the will-power is constrained and not free. This conclusion I hold to be hasty and unwise. True, we should not act without a reason, nor against reason; but it does not hence follow that the reason or motive in any case stands in the relation to the will-power that cause does to its effect. There is a vast difference between a reason and a cause. It is of the nature of a *cause* that it is always followed by its effect. Whereas, a reason so far as anything objective may be regarded as a reason, is not always followed by its effect. If it were always so followed, it would then

cease to be a *reason;* it would be a *cause.*

Objective reasons, so far as *objects* may be reasons, are uniform, and would tend to produce uniform results or effects. Moreover, these effects must always be good, if they are dependent entirely upon the reasons which produce them ; for their powers, as outside forces, are all in themselves and are of God, and are therefore very good. But in fact the effects of so-called objective reasons are not always good. The cause of this must of course be sought outside of the objects called reasons. It follows, then, that the will is not always controlled by objective reasons. We admit that the will power does not act without a reason; still it appears to me that the one that wills determines for himself the reason of his action. This reason is often, in the concrete, bad, whereas in the abstract, or so far as the reason for an act is found

in any objective thing, it is never bad. Hence, the ultimate controlling power in bringing about any act is not in any objective thing, as a reason, but is in the reasoner.

It is further held that it is inconceivable that the soul itself can will, or act in the matter of willing, without some antecedent power or force exerted *binding* it to act. But God wills, and that, too, without any such antecedent force being exerted over his will-power. So we must believe.

He could certainly have made man with a like capacity if he had willed to do so. To say that he did not do so is to absurdly beg the question. To prove that he did not do so is what no one has done or can do. I believe it to be most in harmony with all the known phenomena of the soul's actions to believe that God did make man, like himself, capable of willing without the influence of an antecedent controlling

force exerted over him. If this be not true, then man is not the author of moral evil in any case.

It has already been stated that abstract motives, or outward objects, possess no moral qualities, either good or bad, which they are of themselves capable of imparting. Indeed, they possess no moral quality. But if it must be conceded that qualities in outward objects exert a controlling power over the soul, causing or determining its acts of will, then, since man is not the author of these controlling outward objects, nor of their powers which are claimed to control the will, he is not the author of any act of volition. But we have seen that moral evil arises out of certain volitions; hence man is not, on this assumption, the author of moral evil. The objects that possess the qualities which serve to control the will are themselves with their qualities, effects, and have their cause or author

in God. The controlling power exerted by them is, therefore, only instrumental, whereas the real actor is God. That is, God does actually and absolutely control the will. Hence he is, on this hypothesis, the author of moral evil. But this conclusion, legitimate and necessary as it is from the premises, is false and inadmissible. Therefore the hypothesis from which it comes is false also.

It has been held, I believe, that God put within man certain dispositions or capacities, and that he created outward objects invested with certain qualities so adjusted to these capacities that the soul is always caused, in the absolute and efficient sense of the term, to will certain things. Or, in the language of dialecticians, the non-*ego* controls and determines the action of the *ego*. Is this true? If so, it is impossible to believe that man is the author of sin in any sense.

A knowledge of that gold in the vault excited my desire. That desire is the motive power of the fatalist. The desire to regard or not to violate the rights of others is also a motive power. The fact that there is no way in which I might obtain the gold except by stealing it does not lessen my desire for it. These two motive powers are now in conflict. In the case of some men the preponderance of power is decidedly in favor of righteousness; in others it is decidedly the reverse. Why this difference? The objects themselves are always the same; they are constant quantities. The cause of the difference in the effects produced upon different persons is to be sought, not in the objects, but in the persons. And evidently this difference in the persons is in and *of* themselves, or is it of God? If the former be true, then man is the author of sin or moral evil; but if the latter, God is its author. If the former

be true, then man is a free agent, and the theory of moral necessity is false; if the latter be true, then the fatalist is right.

It is also noticeable that the same extrinsic motive influence is followed by different effects upon the same person at different times. At one time he indignantly refuses to steal the $50,000.00, whereas, at another time near by and with other influences essentially the same, he readily steals the same amount. Why is this? The motive, as an outward thing in itself, continued the same. Hence the difference in the result is found to be not in the motive, but, as before, in the man or in his Maker. If in the former, he is a free agent and the author of sin; if in the latter, God is the author of sin.

It will be seen that I do not attempt to point out the author of moral evil in the case of its first existence or when it was first born in God's universe, but

only to show who its author is in any given case. In the case of the angels that kept not their first estate, or that sinned, I suppose themselves to have been the authors of the sin that ruined them. In the case of the first sin, the motives which we may say induced it could have had no evil in themselves abstractly; and therefore they could not have exerted morally an evil influence. Neither could God have exerted, directly or indirectly, any evil influence over them. Nay, more, God could not have failed to make his angel creatures for virtue and not for vice, and therefore he did make them capable of the virtue designed in their creation. If it be asked, How, then, did the angels come to sin? the answer is easy. God has a government for Heaven as well as for the Earth, for angels as well as for men. The angels were placed under laws which they did not keep. The cause of their violating the laws given

them by the righteous Lord was themselves, wholly themselves. If we argue that in view of the angelic nature, we cannot see how the desire for that which was wrong could have sprung up in their hearts, the reply is: Our ignorance is no premise for the conclusion that it did not originate in and of themselves.

We *assume* that God did not in any way make them sin, or make them to sin. Circumstances have no evil in them, and hence can impart none; therefore the *angels* were the authors of their sins. Moreover, we perhaps assume to know more of the angelic nature than we really do know; or, much of what we suppose we know of their nature is possibly false. Why may not the angels' sin have arisen just as our sin does? Indeed, since we reason from the known to the unknown, we are compelled to suppose it did. There is no reason to suppose there was

anything peculiar about their sin. The same is true in regard to the sin in the Garden. Adam and Eve sinned when they ate the forbidden fruit. They were themselves the authors of their sin. Their sin occurred just as every other sin does and must. They saw the forbidden fruit, they lusted after it, they took and ate of it, they sinned.

The secret of many men's troubles over the question of moral evil will be found to be a quarrel with God for having made things as he did; or it is in a misunderstanding of the nature that their MAKER did really give them. An error concerning man's nature being taken and accepted, a false philosophy, mental and moral, and a false theology, will follow.

I am convinced that no fatalist understands the science of mind, and hence, no such one can produce a correct mental or moral science. His elementary principles and definitions

being wrong, his system embracing them must be wrong also.

CHAPTER III.

WILL MORAL EVIL HAVE AN END?

The decision of this question should not be attempted without or until a calm, severe and protracted examination of it. Of one thing we are certain at the very beginning. Moral evil has not yet come to an end. We are enabled, from our present point of view, to see and to study its history for four or five thousand years, and at no time has its end seemed to be near or even to be approaching. But suppose I should assert, with any comforting degree of assurance, that moral evil will certainly end, what must the grounds of the conclusion be? It seems to me that they would be: 1. The intuitions of my reason furnish or force this decision; or, 2nd. The history of the past points to this conclu-

sion; or 3rd. The holy Scriptures teach it.

1. In regard to the first head, I do not feel sure of being able to give a wholly unobjectionable view. I do feel safe, however, in saying that the world's innate ideas, if it have any on this subject, have not done much for it in furnishing or forcing this conclusion. While it has always meant to be blessed, it has never been blessed. While the wish has ever been for a paradise without a tempter or a temptation, the fear, in view of sin confessed has ever been of calamity.

The fact is, it is probably impossible not to think that sin must, unless it is forgiven, be punished. I believe every body who thinks believes this. So if one should assert that punishment for sin shall come to an end, it must be on the hypothesis that sin itself, or wrong-doing, shall end. Is it a necessity of our being to suppose that sinning will

cease, soon or ever? If any one should say so, might not some one ask in reply, Why, then, did it begin? If, in the face of the fact of its at one time non-existence, with all the conditions and environments as good as could be, and as good as they can ever be expected to be, moral evil took beginning, might it not be that it will persist? That is, if it could under the circumstances begin, and it did, might it not continue on αἰώνιος? I feel sure we have no intuitions to the contrary. As long as men or angels are, as free moral agents, under any sort of government, we cannot rationally feel certain that the time will ever come when and after which there shall be no more sinning.

But suppose we could see that sinning had ceased, or would certainly cease, what must we think of those who have already become guilty? One who is guilty must either suffer or be pardoned. But, as suffering has no

tendency to remove guilt, if it does end or is to end at all, it must be pardoned.

When pardoned the work must be so effectually done that the one who was guilty shall have "no more conscience of sin," nor any fear of punishment for it.

May we feel sure, *a priori*, that all sin and guilt will be pardoned, so that no one shall any more sin, and that all guilt and fear of punishment shall be destroyed? Such a glorious event *may be* in the future for us, but I have no premonitions in my soul of its coming.

Some one has said, in substance, that it is inconsistent with the nature of God and with the purpose he must have had in man's creation that moral evil should continue on forever, or *that it should never cease.* If the one who dreamed this will try it, he will find the problem as to how, consistent with the nature of God and his purpose in the creation of men, moral evil could

have *begun*, a problem as hard to solve as the other. He will probably, if he is really a great man, find that of himself he is, on this problem, able to do nothing. It is nearly of kin to Paul's question, "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus?" No one can certainly say or know *all* of God, as to why he did as he did and what will certainly be the outcome of moral evil except as God, who only can know, shall reveal it. All of the nature of God with which I am acquainted, bearing upon this subject, is: God is perfectly good; he made man for virtue and happiness, and he will, as far and certainly *as he can*, bring the end designed to pass; or, which is the same thing, he will, if he can, put an end to moral evil. But, I am also obliged to suppose, God would have *prevented the birth or existence* of

moral evil if he could; and as he did not prevent it, I suppose he could not. Now, as God did not prevent the existence of moral evil in its beginning, it seems to me to follow that, maybe, he cannot and therefore will not, bring it to an end. If this be so, and I see not how it could be otherwise, it is not a logical presumption to suppose that God can or will certainly bring moral evil to an end.

Suppose God should undertake to bring moral evil to an end, and I suppose he has done that very thing, how would he or must he proceed? He could, I suppose, kill all men and angels, and in this way accomplish the end. But, the fact that he created men and angels is proof that their existence was a moral necessity to some end which we may possibly know or which we possibly may not know. In the creation, the contingency of sin, God either foresaw or he did not. If he did, then his de-

cision was that, even with the moral evil foreseen, it was better to create than not. So it would follow also, and for the same reason, that, though God should foresee that evil should never end, still it was better to create men and angels than not.

But, suppose God did not foresee the contingency of sin, then what? It is at least true that he saw the fact as soon as it transpired, and events show that he decided that man had better live than die, the proof of which is, he did and does live. Now, as this decision of the Almighty is in fact before us, we not only have no reason to suppose that God will bring moral evil to an end in that way, but we are logically certain that he will not do so.

Again, God might hang or hold up before us the most bewitching, enchanting, alluring inducements promising happiness, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual, unmixed with sorrow,

pains, tears or fears of death forever, if only man will put an end to moral evil, each man for himself. Yes, God might have done or might do all this, and, indeed, he has done all this, and for this very purpose, too. It would seem to follow that this is God's way of solving the problem of sin, and that every other way is implicitly condemned. Therefore, I assume that this plan is not only the best that God could devise for putting to an end sin and its consequences, but it is the only plan God will ever adopt for this end. Indeed, of moral and spiritual influences, and God can employ no other kind in controlling men and angels, none better or mightier is conceivable. It follows that whoever fails to turn or be turned by the power of the Gospel cannot be turned. God has no resources of moral force to reach him.

But, there is another element in God's moral government, in all moral govern-

ment, "the fear of punishment." As a "terror to evil doers" and, for "praise to them that do well," is the fear of punishment. God might hold up before men the direst punishment in case they should live lives of unrighteousness. This, God has done. So, when we have considered all the moral persuasions to righteousness and dissuasions from vice, which God has employed, and which are found in the Word of God, to make an end of sin and its consequences, we are bound in reason to think that, like all of God's works, it is perfect. Now, from all we know, what must we say is the prospect or probability that these moral forces of God will ever put an end to moral evil? I see no grounds for reasonable hope herein. Is it said that these reasonings, or at least some of them, have no logical force except with those who believe the Bible? This is true. But a moment's thought will make it plain that no one else could

feel any concern on the subject. There can be no question with any one else in regard to moral evil. Where one has no God he can have no future, and therefore no hope in the world. Such an one must deny the existence of moral evil. So I suppose my reasoning is addressed rightly to those only who claim to believe the Bible, or who believe that God is and is a rewarder of all men according to their works.

2. Looked at historically, what is the conclusion in regard to the ending of moral evil?

That punishment for sin and crime is right, viewed both from the human and the Divine standpoint, is, I think, certain. Whatever stands out distinctly in human history as a spontaneity, or is universal, is right. At least, there is no one, in such case, to object. That sin, or the evil doer, should be punished is certainly the sentiment of mankind. It is noticeable, too, that as civil-

ization advances this feature in government is everywhere maintained. Modes of punishment may have varied and the severity of punishment may have relaxed in places and at times, but the fact of punishment for sin and crime remains everywhere. It is beyond question that no government can or ever could exist long with the fear of punishment eliminated. No people in the world were ever willing to make the experiment of omitting it.

That God did incorporate "fear of punishment" as an element of his moral and spiritual government, and that this fact is read in the Bible concerning all peoples and dispensations, is, I suppose, not doubted by any one. Immediately upon the creation, God said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Again it is said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Indeed, under Moses, "every transgression and disobedience

received a just recompense of reward." Under the better covenant it is said: "Of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God?" etc. Notwithstanding these evident deliverances of the reason and of the Word of God, there is skepticism in the world and even in the church on this subject. That there should be anything of the kind in the *pulpit* is decidedly inexcusable.

Some persons say they believe the Bible, only they do not believe that it declares punishment, or at least severe or endless punishment, against evil doers. Sin, they allow, is a bad thing, and something terrible will happen to the evil-doer. But what is it, I ask, will happen to the one who leads a life of sin that will not befall the one who lives a holy life? Is the sinner poor? So is the righteous. Has he but few friends in the world? So it often is

with the righteous. Has he much of bodily affliction and grief of spirit? The good have like afflictions also. Does the wicked follow the objects of his heart's affections to the grave, and finally enter it himself? So it comes to the righteous. Is it said, The sinner suffers great and terrible remorse of conscience on account of his sins? The good, conscientious man, probably suffers more, in this respect, than does he; for, the more one sins the less he suffers, in his conscience, for wrong doing. Does one say, There is at least no hell or devil? No man living has any *personal* knowledge on this subject, nor has he ever seen one who has. We know but little of the future. Indeed we, strictly speaking, *know* nothing of it. In regard to the future we are compelled to rely wholly upon those who do know something of it. So, our knowing the future or any of its happenings, is conditioned upon the revelations of

God, who only knows what it will bring to us. It seems to me, we cannot know whether moral evil, which we *know* does not end in this life, will come to an end in the future or not, except as the Word of God decides the question. Past history does not say that moral evil has at any time had an end, nor does it assert that it will.

CHAPTER IV.

DO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT MORAL EVIL SHALL END?

I see a man living in sin all his life. He is often warned, but he hardens his heart and persists in his sinful life. Must I promise him life, happiness forever, beyond the grave? I would promise the wicked life if it were right to do so. To say it is right, independently of what God says on the subject, or without revelation, is what no one is qualified to do and, therefore, what no one should dare to do. God only knows, and hence he only is competent to decide this question. To threaten the righteous as God has not threatened him, is to do wrong. To strengthen the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked ways, by promising him life, is to do even

the wicked man himself a deep wrong. Ezek. 13: 23. Is the punishment of the wicked endless? If God says so, it is; if not, then it is not. If God has said neither yes nor no, then we cannot know. To say that such punishment is so terrible that God could not be the author of it, or rather, could not permit it, is to assert what we do not and cannot, *a priori*, know to be true. To attempt to set aside severe or endless punishment on this ground, is to contradict a large number of the statements of the Bible and to ignore some of the plainest teachings of human experience and observation. Hundreds of things mentioned in the Bible and noted in our daily experience, as oppressions, murders, idolatries and all the Heaven-daring and God-defying crimes of all the ages which have occurred and are passing, are wholly inconsistent with such a claim.

Suppose A should sin against B,

when will B forgive him? I ask not, when will he not hate or persecute or seek to destroy him? but when will he forgive him altogether, *ex animo*, and hold or regard him as though he had never sinned? I suppose B will do this when A repents from the heart and, as far as possible, rights the wrong, according as B feels the wrong and requires reparation at his hands. Before this and without this men are not accustomed to expect forgiveness, or to grant it to others; nor does God grant forgiveness except on the ground named. Now suppose A *never* repents, then of course B *never* forgives him. A is cut off from B forever, and if it be a calamity and involves A in misery, it is calamity and misery forever. So, if the sinner *never repents* of that which separates between him and his God, the separation must be endless. There are certain characters who are forever excluded from the society of

our wives and daughters if they do not repent. Nor do we, in such case, allow that we are unkind, but that the very reverse is true; nor do we hold that *we* exclude them, but that they exclude themselves. So, we see, the sinner dying impenitent does not at once, if at all, go into Heaven. If he were to do so Jesus could not say to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant," every word of which would be a lie. But might he not repent after death? Suppose he should; then it could not be said that he is "judged according to the deeds done in (or through) the body." 2 Cor. 5:10. His final condition would be determined by what took place after and out of the body, which contradicts Paul. Moreover, the Bible certainly does not plainly *say* that any one will have the privilege of repenting, or that he will actually repent in the future life or state. What, aside from the teachings of the Bible, would we

naturally expect on this subject? This, I suppose: If the lost one should have better society and more godly surroundings; if he should have a better, a more tender or affecting gospel preached to him by evangelists more able to deliver the message of God in the future life than he had in this; if he could be expected there to be *younger* in sin, and hence more impressible than while he lived on earth, then perhaps we might surmise it possible that the lost one might repent after death. But what are the facts in the case?

1. It is not my information that the sinner will be surrounded by more pious, prayerful mothers, fathers, sisters, neighbors, preachers and churches, preaching to him, praying for him, weeping over him and crying to him, saying, "Why will you die?" in the future life than he had here.

2. Can reason or imagination con-

ceive of a gospel more affecting or soul-subduing than is the present gospel of Jesus Christ? What more could God have done than he has done in the gospel of his grace? He has no other Son to give, and no gift more dear or sacrifice greater than his only begotten and well beloved Son, Jesus. I venture to assert that a greater or better gospel cannot and hence will not be given.

3. There will not, for there cannot, be better preachers in perdition than we have here. The stars of hope and promise had been rising here and there, now and then, for four thousand years, pointing to and preparing the world for His coming. When this expectation of, and crying anxiety for, and this dying want of a helper and healer had come to its uttermost, Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his beams, arose.

He was heralded by the angels, the Star in the east, and by John the Bap-

tist. Abraham preached the then coming gospel. John the Baptist announced it and, so did Jesus himself. Paul says: "It began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed to us by those who heard him, God also bearing witness with them by signs, wonders and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit." What a preaching force we have here! and such preachers! We have here all the holy prophets since the world began; and the Apostles, the Spirit, Jesus and the Father; also signs, wonders and miracles, good men and women by the hundreds. Again, we have the crucifixion and the resurrection, hungerings, stripes, imprisonments and martyrdoms. Is it probable that in perdition there will be better preachers than these?

It was not ignorance nor a want of infinite goodness that led the Almighty Father to commit this treasure to

earthen vesels. Not angels nor spirits could preach it so well as men. This I know, for God did actually commission men to do his preaching, and not angels nor spirits, except temporarily. Even Jesus after his death did it not in person, but he bade men go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

4. The sinner in the abyss will, in fact, not be younger in sin, and hence more impressible; on this ground, therefore, we may not infer repentance as probable in the future state. If now the sinner withstands all the influences to repentance here, it is not probable that he would repent should he have the offer made in the future state. It is a fact that he does resist all of "God's power for salvation" here. *This we know.* Therefore, our conclusion seems to be clearly a necessary one. Jesus said to the rich man, through Abraham, that if his brothers

refused to hear Moses and the prophets they would not be persuaded though one should go to them from the dead. This is, to me, a decided indication that no better or mightier influences can be brought from the other side than are on this.

It is sometimes held that the pains of perdition will certainly bring the rebellious to terms; that they will repent under the discipline of suffering. This I do not believe. It is contrary to all I know of the human and of the Divine natures to suppose that moral character, such as fits persons for heaven's blissful society, can be whipped into men or *forced* upon them. God says, Come unto me, only under circumstances where they may fairly exercise their *unconstrained volition* in choosing or refusing. *Character* under any other circumstances is an impossibility, and the attainment or the enjoyment of Heaven, except on the condition of

CHARACTER, is not to be supposed a possible or even a desirable event.

But I am free to admit that our fallible reason is not sufficient, of itself, for the satisfactory discussion and decision of this question. We must rely implicitly upon the Word of God for our conclusion. He who indulges in warm *exhortation* or fervid declamation, in speaking or writing on this question, does, it may be unwittingly, but nevertheless really, confess that the Bible fails to speak to his satisfaction. Exhortation comes all right *after demonstration*, but before it or without it is a silly thing. This much I have said that we might be well settled in the conclusion that, in making up our verdict on the question before us, the Bible and the Bible alone, should be our guide, as in everything religious. To the law and to the testimony, then, let us go.

I have said and perhaps shown that the wicked who die in their sins do not

go immediately into Heaven; that if they are finally holy and happy their repentance and reformation must take place in the future state, as it certainly does not in this. I have shown that there is nothing incompatible with the character of God in his punishing the wicked severely or even eternally. I have also shown, I think, that in the light of unquestionable facts of human reason and experience, there is no antecedent presumption necessarily lying against the probability of severe future or even endless punishment. As, after death and after the judgment, the perdition of impenitent sinners is certain, it behooves those who affirm that they will be ransomed from that place or condition to prove it. To be satisfactory the proof should be very full and clear; and as God only *knows* the fate of the wicked after death, the proofs must be taken from his Word.

1. I cite John 5: 1-29:

"After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep *market*, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he said unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath-day: it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place. Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because

he had done these things on the Sabbath-day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them;* even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all *men* should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He

that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

In this passage we have an account of an impotent man laid near the pool

—Bethesda. On a Sabbath day Jesus passed by, and speaking kindly to him, said: Wilt thou be made whole? He replied, in substance, Yes. Jesus said: "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." The Pharisees were offended at the man for carrying his bed on the Sabbath day, and at Jesus for telling him to do it. In the course of the conversation, Jesus said that his own Father had been working hitherto, and that now he was working. The Jews saw that he made himself a co-worker with God and that he claimed to be the Son of God. That Jesus should put himself on an equality with their God was to them intolerable. But Jesus proceeds to say to them that he would in their own time, and in their presence, raise the dead. In this they would see that men should honor the Son as they honor the Father.

He then goes further and declares that the time would come "when all in

the tombs shall hear his voice and come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation." This shows that, 1. Those spoken of were to be in their graves. 2. They were all to be raised. 3. Those who had been good would be raised to life. 4. Those who had been bad would be raised to condemnation. So, the wicked, after death, the grave and the resurrection, are to be condemned. They go not into life with the righteous, but are condemned. The repentance, reformation and restoration of the wicked will be, if at all, *after the judgment.*

2. In Matt. 12: 31-32, we have an account of the sin against the Holy Spirit as follows:

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be

forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come."

This is admitted to be a passage difficult to interpret or explain to entire satisfaction. It is, however, for our present purpose, plain enough. There was such a sin as the Savior mentioned, committed or liable to be committed by men, else he could not have spoken as he did. He said of the sinner: "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come." If the word translated world in this passage signifies this life or the next life, respectively, then we have the whole question settled. Moral evil shall have no end. But if the Jewish and Christian ages, respectively, are meant, then the lesson is, the sin men-

tioned shall not be forgiven in either. Now, I suppose if God could not see how to forgive this sin under either the type or the anti-type, the shadow or the substance, the Jewish or the Christian dispensations, there is no reason to suppose that he could forgive it at all. If it is not possible to forgive this sin at all, it follows that its punishment is eternal; or, moral evil shall have no end.

Again; the 31st verse reads: "Wherefore I say to you, all sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven to men, but the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven to men." This assertion, as it stands, seems to be a full, round, complete one, conveying a distinct and finished thought. The thought is that the sin mentioned "shall not be forgiven to men." If this be literally true, as I doubt not it is, then moral evil shall not end. As this verse is very plain, I suppose the correct inter-

pretation of the one following would be in entire harmony with it. Omitting the former part of it, we read: "But whoever may speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him either in this age or in that which is to come."—*Green.* This is held by some to suggest that some sins are, probably, forgiven in the future state. If this were true, it would furnish no final disposition of moral evil; *it* could not end. But I submit: are not the expressions, "in this world (age) or the age to come," but a proverbial way of asserting with emphasis that it can "*never, never*" happen? I incline decidedly to this view. If this be not the correct idea, it seems to me that the different parts of the Lord's statement of the case are not in harmony. We are not told why it is that this sin could not be forgiven. That is, no doubt, the reason why we do not know. Let us fear, lest an opportunity of entering

into the rest that *remains* for the people of God, having been given to us, any of us should fail to enter in. God will have us enter in if he can. But, if we *will not*, then, HE *cannot.*

3. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye

came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?* Or, when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked,

or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Matt. 25: 31-46.)

In this passage we have a reference to the judgment scene. 1. The Son of man sits on his glorious throne. 2. All nations are gathered before him. 3. Jesus divides them into two classes, the righteous and the wicked. 4. To the righteous he will say, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." 5. To the wicked he will say, "Depart from me, ye accursed ones, into the eternal fire," etc. At verse 46 he says: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

It is said by some that the word

αἰώνιος, in this passage, does not in every case mean eternal; that it is sometimes applied to things of no great duration.

The latter clause of this sentence is true. The word *seems*, in some cases, to designate the idea of limited duration. But the same may be said of the English words, *eternal*, *everlasting*, etc. We say of a man, he is an *everlasting* talker, he is *always* wrong, the fields are *eternally* fair. In such connections these words are pressed into special service and carry only a part of their current meaning. We do not infer in such cases that these words designate limited duration. Limitation, where it occurs at all, is indicated by words or matter in the context, and not by these words or any one of them. It is not strictly true that the English word everlasting or eternal, signifies or means limited duration, ever. It, as a word, does not. So of the Greek words

αἰών and αἰώνοις. They mean duration, and they suggest or intimate nothing of limitation in any case. All ideas of limitation come from other sources, not from these words in any place that I have seen. Where there is no limiting word or circumstance in the connection the duration continues; it is eternal. It seems to me that the extent of meaning that belongs to the word αἰώνιον (everlasting), in this verse, used to declare the length of the punishment to befall the wicked, is clear from the fact that the same word is employed to measure the duration of the life of the righteous in the everlasting kingdom of God. The punishment of the wicked is said, in this verse, to be αἰώνιον, the life of the righteous is αἰώνιον, also. These two statements are in the same verse and are clauses of the same sentence, and they stand in antithesis. If the punishment be limited, so is the life. But the life in this case is allow-

ed to be endless; so, then, must the punishment, qualified by the same term of duration, be endless also. The evidence of eternal punishment is precisely the same as that of eternal life. Let us be careful that we do not explain away heaven, eternal life, and the eternal years of God in our anxiety to discount the evidence for eternal punishment.

4. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite

unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10: 26-31.)

This passage seems to say that if one commit a certain sort of sin there is left in store no longer a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fierceness of a fire that is to devour the adversaries. Of course some did, and still may, commit that sin, whatever it is, else Paul had not warned the Hebrews against it.

For the remission of that sin there is no sacrifice; and as there is no forgiveness without a sacrifice, there is, for such an one, no forgiveness at all. And, as we have before shown that one who sins must be either punished or pardoned, and, since in this case there can be no forgiveness, it follows that

the punishment cannot end. And as the punishment cannot end, moral evil shall not come to an end.

But the divine writer continues further to say: "The one who despised Moses' law died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who has trodden under foot the Son of God and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?" The Jew who despised Moses' law suffered as far as man can inflict punishment on the *body* of his fellow, yet the one who commits this certain sin against the Son of God is declared to deserve a much sorer punishment. This punishment is God's fiery indignation, and it should be looked for with much fearfulness by the sinner. The apostle adds these significant words: "It is a fearful thing

to fall into the hands of the living God."

Many think that, since God is so good, it is a good and safe thing to fall into his hands. So, indeed, it is if one be good. But in the case of the sinner it is a thing full of fearfulness. This manifestly extends the punishment of the sinner as far beyond all that may befall him in this life as Jesus is exalted above Moses in excellency, power and eternity.

5. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10: 28.)

In this chapter Jesus gives us an account of his sending out his twelve apostles. He warned them of the dangers before them. They would be as sheep among wolves; they should be hated of all men, or, of all classes of men, for his sake. They were to be

brought before governors, judges and councils. Their own nearest of kin would be their enemies. These would deliver them up to death, etc. In the face of all these things Jesus puts their duty before them and raises the question whether they would go forward and do right, or shrink from the discharge of duty on account of fear. He says in effect: If you would be controlled in your lives by your fears, if you could be drawn aside from the discharge of duty, on account of your fears, I will warn you of whom you should be afraid, viz: "And be not afraid of those that kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." Herein is pointed out the fate of those who are so afraid of men—of the world—that they do not serve God. Jesus declares that it is a much more fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, if

one has lived an evil life, than is anything that men can do, even if they should kill you; for men can go no further than to take the life of the body; but *after* this and *beyond* this, God can and will cast the soul and body of the sinner described into hell. This terrible end, made certain by the explicit language of Jesus, is not very assuring that God is too good to punish the sinner severely, if not forever. Woe be to him who "with lies," "strengthens the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked ways, by promising him life," where God does not promise him life. Ezek. 13: 22.

In 2 Thes. 1: 6-10 Paul mentions the persecutions endured by the Thessalonians, and how faithful they were under them. He assures them that God knew all about these things and that he would certainly mete out to them and

to their persecutors righteous retribution, in due season.

He says: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired by all them that believe, in that day — because our testimony among you was believed." Here Paul asserts that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to those who distressed them. The easy-going at this day think, or at least say, that a righteous God cannot possibly punish the wick-

ed, or, if at all, at least not severely, or if severely, the punishment will certainly have an end.

The apostle asserts that the punishment herein denounced against the wicked would begin "at the revealing of Jesus Christ from Heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, awarding vengeance to those who know not God and to those who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus." At the tenth verse he says this shall take place, "at that day." These statements of the apostle are not all true of any class of persons while in the flesh, and hence they refer to what shall be in the future life. Now, that there is *punishment* herein denounced against the wicked and that this punishment shall be in the future state are things unquestionable. The other question is as to the duration of it. On this point the apostle is as explicit and unambiguous as he could possibly have been. If he had intend-

ed to contradict Universalists and Restorationists, he could not have done so more completely than he has in this passage. At least, I so think. He says: "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."

No re-translation or exegesis of this passage can, I suppose, make it yield a meaning different from that which lies on the surface. From this, as from other passages examined, it seems to me clear that we have no grounds, laid in the Bible, to hope that moral evil will have an end. In speaking and writing on this subject, it is clear that quite a number of our pulpit people never find a text in the Bible to suit them. Their writings and speeches are not at all in accord with the express order of the apostle Peter, which says: "If any one speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."

Paul says to Timothy: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound teachings; but after their own lusts will heap for themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they will turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables." That time has doubtless come long since and stuck with us closer than a brother.

Sin has its birth in the heart as righteousness has. All men are constantly seeing opportunities for gratifying, in unlawful ways, their carnal desires. Desire being begotten brings forth sin, and sin when it is finished brings forth death, says the Apostle James. When the desire for some unlawful indulgence has risen high, the *wish* to have removed those restraints which God and good men have thrown around us to keep us in lawful bounds, grows strong. And who does not know that, when the *wish* is strong, the way to the conclusion we would have is

easily found. Even the words of God are often shadowed by reason of our passions blinding us. This is true, not of a few erratic men only, *but of all of us.* Knowing how liable we are to be misled in this way, what amount of watching and praying we ought to do that we fall not!

These passages of the Word of God seem to leave no reasonable ground for doubt that those who die without hope may not hope to be restored or saved in the life to come.

CHAPTER V.

POST MORTEM GOSPEL.

It is often asked: Are there not men and women by the thousands who go through this life and into eternity without knowing Jesus or his Gospel? What is their fate in the next world? May they be saved, or must they be lost? Will they be judged by a law which they never knew nor could know? What of infants, idiots, etc., who are ignorant of the Gospel without any fault of theirs? These all die, as they lived, ignorant of Jesus and his will, and for their ignorance they are not at fault. Must they or any of them be judged and condemned by a law which they did not and could not know? I suppose not. One can hardly be responsible for the violation of a law, of the existence and terms of which he

knew nothing and could have known nothing. One such cannot, in justice, be regarded as *violating* such a law, and is not a sinner in the eye of such a law. Nor do I believe that any of those under present consideration will be condemned for what is called "original sin." The Word of God does not mention the existence of such sin, and if it did, these parties could have no knowledge of the fact, and if they did really have such knowledge the fact would furnish no reason for their condemnation. It is not possible that, in a righteous government, any one person should be judged or punished for the act or sin of another. With this mere assertion I leave the statement at the bar of enlightened public opinion with no doubt as to the verdict.

But, if these parties may not be condemned by a law of which they knew and could have known nothing, may they be saved by the operation of such

a law? I suppose not. [I would not be understood as holding that a soul is ever saved by the operation of *law*, simply.] A law that pertains to the salvation of the soul can have no effect either way, that is, in condemning or justifying a soul that neither believes nor disbelieves it (unless that soul is culpable for its condition), and one who knows not of such a law can do neither. By the present hypothesis, the persons under review do not know the law of life, and may not be blamed for not knowing it; so, it seems to me, that if they are to be judged by the law of the new covenant that they should have and, therefore, will have a chance after death to hear, believe and embrace it. The question as to whether such an opportunity will be given, and, if given, whether it would probably be accepted or not, is more fully discussed in another section.

2. Possibly these parties may be

under and shall be judged by another law to which, perhaps, Paul alludes in Romans 2: 12-16:

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned under law, shall be judged by law: (for not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing, one another:) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."

If our clients are under *the* or *a* law, such as that to which we herein refer, we must try to be content with saying

but little. We have not sufficient knowledge of it, the shadow of which is probably seen in this passage, to justify us in affirming very definitely what the results, under its operations, will be.

But suppose all persons who die unsaved should have the Gospel preached to them after death, or that they or any of them are to be judged by some other rule or law, known or not by us, is it certain or even probable they would all be saved? that *all* would repent and turn to God, and thus put an end to moral evil? As before stated and argued at some length, God has done and is now doing everything that he can consistently do to destroy the works of the devil, and that under circumstances as favorable as they *can be* made here, and as favorable as they can be hoped to be in *hades*, and yet sin is a hideous factor in the civiliza-

tion of the most favored peoples, and its shadow is not growing shorter.

We are told that it is not reasonable to suppose that God would withhold from those who die without a chance to know and do the truth, the Gospel forever, and that "such an outlook is not cut off by the Scriptures. We are thus at liberty to suppose that God's plan of recovering men by the motives of redemption, which we see in operation here, may be continued in another world for those who are removed to it before they have been reached by these motives." If God's plan of recovering men, by the motives of redemption now in operation should be extended to those who are removed to another world before they have been reached by them, then, these motives of redemption should be continued before these persons until they are converted; it being understood that they will certainly turn, all of them, sooner or later. Or,

put it thus: As such an outlook is not cut off by the Scriptures, we may suppose that God will continue to press the motives of redemption upon the unsaved dead till all shall be saved. It is because of this feature of *post mortem* preaching and salvation that I am careful to notice the subject here; for if this doctrine be true, our moral evil question is settled. It will end.

Now, suppose we should admit that God's Word does not cut off such outlook, which we do not, is it logically certain that we are, therefore, at liberty to indulge the hope of it? Is the silence of God's Word, on this or on any other subject, our permission to believe anything? Are we certainly authorized to believe or do or hope anything, as we may choose or fancy, because the Word of God is silent on that point? So far as the silence of the Scriptures is suggestive to us of God's will on any subject, it points, rather, towards the con-

clusion that he does not wish us to know.

God says, Deut. 29 : 29 : "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." No one ought to be anxious to preach what God does, confessedly, not teach. Let one make a list of the things about which the Bible is silent and he will find himself quite liable to not believe that the entire catalogue is worthy of acceptance. Of course, the silence of the Bible forces no conclusion upon us, only, perhaps, this: where God did not think it wise or good to speak to us, it may be wise in us not to speak. But, if the Bible is silent on any subject, does not this fact leave the way open for us to gain information on that subject from other sources if we can? Certainly, I think so. The only logical inference that may be drawn from

God's silence on this subject, if he is silent on it, is: *he is silent.* As above, a probable conclusion is that he does not wish us to know.

If God submits the Gospel to many of our race who accept it and are saved and happy forever; and if there be those who have not learned of its existence, and for no fault of their own are not saved by the Gospel, it may be asked, does it not seem probable that God would in some way give them in the future state further opportunity.

The Judge of the whole earth will do right. God will decide the cases of men in or for the future state, as here, according to their deserts; and in making up the judgment every circumstance legitimately belonging to the case will be fully and justly considered. Of this I feel certain. But, that post mortem Gospel preaching shall be thought necessary to Divine fairness and justice in the adjudication of the cases of those

who die without God and without hope, is not forced upon me by the nature of God or the circumstances of men here or hereafter, as a logical conclusion.

It is urged that they ought not to be consigned to hopeless perdition for not doing what they never knew to be their duty, and are not blameworthy for not knowing. To this I agree, and if this were the only alternative, our way to a satisfactory conclusion would be dark. But, as before suggested, may not all these persons, or classes of persons, be under the law of right, a knowledge of which every one may obtain from the light of nature, the light of reason and conscience to which, as before said, Paul probably alludes in Romans 2: 12: "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law." Why not allow that they are to be tried by this law? If it be said

that its provisions are not quite so plain and full as could be desired, my answer is: I suppose it is certain that God knows this fact, and that he can and will, with infinite wisdom, justice and mercy, adjust the final judgment to every case, to perfection, beyond the possibility or power of human or divine criticism.

All this, it seems to me, is plain enough, and is certainly true; but, right or wrong, the question: Will moral evil finally end? is not logically affected thereby. My apology for giving so much attention to this subject in this treatise is, because of its supposed bearing upon the final destiny of the wicked, or the question of the end of moral evil, by *some* of the advocates of the final holiness and happiness of all men. For this reason I shall pursue the investigation still further.

3. Prof. Egbert C. Smyth, Co-Editor of the Andover Review, in a schol-

arly examination of "Probation After Death," says: "In this connection it is important to observe the widening of hope in the church concerning both classes of persons under consideration," that is, *infants* and *heathen*. This is, no doubt, an important point to be observed. One who has been wrestling and worrying with a conviction, or even fears or suspicions, that infants dying in infancy might be lost forever, ought to feel much better when he comes to see that God cannot possibly punish an unoffending infant, idiot or any such one who dies in that condition; that God cannot punish the heathen for not believing in Jesus, whereas, it was never *possible* for them to believe. Yes, I should think that a person or people who had been under such a delusion, blighting and every way misleading as such a misconception of truth is, would "feel real good" when a widening, such as, "It is now com-

monly believed that all who die in infancy will be saved," had come. Such a triumph of reason over the ignorance and prejudice of the dark ages is good ground for rejoicing. The Professor is no doubt right in this. I should hardly call it a narrowing, that men with the Word of God in their hands should believe and hold that infants, so dying, are lost. I would call it ignorance or something worse. His satanic majesty has wrought a great many curious mischiefs in the world, and this doctrine was (or is) one of them.

The Professor does not limit the evidence of widening to the fact that infants dying in infancy are now supposed to be saved. The heathen, he thinks, may be saved too, by having the Gospel preached to them in hades. And, then, the atonement is beginning to be or has come to be regarded as universal in its provisions. He says: "The universality of the atonement points to the

same conclusion. It seems to be impossible to think this doctrine out and suppose that the Divine purpose limits the possibility of its operation as a motive to a select few of our race."

This is undoubtedly true. Again, "The final judgment of the entire race, by the Son of man, involves the same result." Now, what is the precise thing supposed to be logically involved in these, now held to be, *universalities?* It is, that the church is widening much beyond what it was, that it is growing broader, more liberal. Suppose it is, what of it? This, I suppose, the Gospel of Jesus Christ may be expected to be preached to the lost, in hades. With not a few the widening is carried on and on, as a logical deduction from the same premises, and the Gospel is preached and pressed and *re*-presented till the salvation of every one is secured, they think.

These extreme conclusions, which are

not supported by any explicit or implicit word of God, are supposed to be justified by the fact of certain widenings which are thought to, logically, involve them. But it is hardly correct to think that because intelligent people have, generally, come to have juster views of God and of his Divine government, and especially have come to understand the specific teachings of the New Testament as touching the subjects of sin, the atonement, the standard of accountability, etc., and hence do not now, so much as formerly, outrage decent common sense and the plain letter of the Word of God in their creeds and tenets of religion, that, therefore, the dead who do not die in the Lord, will surely have the Gospel preached to them in the next world.

CHAPTER VI.

SPIRITS IN PRISON.

But it is certain, I think, beyond all reasonable doubt, that no one knows or can know what the condition of one in the future world is or will be unless one who knows the hereafter in this respect should reveal it. And as no one but God can do this, it follows that unless he says to us that the Gospel will be preached to the unsaved dead in the next world, we may not believe it, and of course we must not preach it.

This reasonable demand has not wholly escaped the notice of the advocates of the doctrine under consideration, and hence we read:

"The Scriptural doctrine of the descent of Christ into Hades, and the apparently necessary logical implication of 1 Pet. 4: 6, warrant an expectation

that the Gospel will be preached in the future world."

1 Pet. 3: 19 and 4: 6 are by some supposed to be quite decisive proof of *post mortem* Gospel preaching and salvation.

Let us first consider some things which these passages do not authorize us to believe; secondly, let us try to see what their lesson is.

1. 1 Pet. 3: 19 certainly does not *say*, unequivocally, that Jesus went in person or otherwise and preached the Gospel of salvation to any who were dead and in Hades at the time of the preaching.

2. The Greek word in this passage, rendered preach, has no necessary reference to the proclamation of "the Gospel." A *proclamation* was, indeed, made. What it was is not said; and though it was made to spirits in prison, probably to some then in Hades, the passage does not say that it was made

to them after their death. The language is quite as well, and much more in harmony with general Bible truth, construed to mean that Jesus, in or by his Spirit, went and preached to the antediluvians, while the ark was being prepared, who, at the time Peter wrote were spirits in prison. This view is made more probable by the fact stated by 2 Peter 2: 5, that Noah was a "preacher of righteousness." God warned Noah some time before the flood came that he would send it upon the world of ungodly people. Heb. 11: 7. Noah preached to these, and it is fairly presumable that God sent him to preach to them. It is a safe presumption also, that the Spirit that spoke through him was the same Spirit of Christ that 1 Pet. 1: 11 says was in all the prophets and which spoke through them. This Jesus is the ROCK that followed Israel in all their troubles. Noah had been warned of God, and hence had

communed with him, concerning the fact and the cause of the impending ruin, and what his duty in the premises was. Among the things to which he was moved was the preaching of righteousness. These points being made sure by the Word of God, is it not most reasonable to think that the Apostle Peter refers to them when he says of Jesus' own Divine Spirit by which he was quickened, he went and "preached to the spirits in prison?"

2. On the hypothesis that this preaching by Jesus Christ was done by him in person after his death, that it was done to the spirits in Hades, is it not strange that this greatest of all missionary tours, made by the Prince of all missionaries, was to only a few thousand persons—those drowned in the flood—and that all the other spirits, numbered by millions, as needy and as deserving as these, were passed by? If it should be held that, maybe,

they were not neglected, the wonder still remains; for it is certain that the drowned ones are *named* as having been addressed, and all others go unmentioned. If the Apostle Peter intended, in this passage, to announce that Jesus went to *all the* dead in Hades and preached the Gospel to them, he certainly failed of his purpose. Is it not probable that, if the apostle had intended to give hope and comfort to the then living, in regard to the dead, to the effect that they should have the Gospel preached to them in Hades if they had failed to accept it in this life, having had the offer here, that he would have plainly stated that fact? And then, to have made this plain statement of much weight or value to the living ones, for whose advantage he wrote, it seems to me he would have announced that, during the two or three days' meeting, so many converts were made and that Jesus left the mission in

good, efficient hands. On the hypothesis now in hand, it appears to me that the reason which caused Jesus to go in person and preach the Gospel to the spirits of *these* dead ones in Hades would have caused him to preach it to all the dead there, and to continue to do so. Indeed, he should, on this theory, preach to all the unconverted living ones, also, and he must always have done so. Especially must he preach the Gospel to the heathen now and have done so in all the past. As he can preach it to *all* the heathen at the same time now as easily as he could have preached in Hades to all the flood-drowned ones who lived in the days of Noah; and as he would as certainly do all this, and ever would, as that he went to the dead antediluvians and preached the Gospel to them, it seems to follow, according to our hypothesis, that he does now, always has and will forever, preach the Gospel to

those in need of it. But in fact he does not, except through his men and women servants, preach to the heathen now, nor has he ever done so, else we should see some proof of it somewhere, sometime. This we not only do not see, but the fact of the entire want of evidence for the affirmative is proof conclusive for the negative. Hence, he did not then and does not now preach to the spirits in prison—to the dead after death, nor to the heathen. The many thousands of missionaries in heathen lands and millions of money annually spent to have the Gospel preached to the heathen are a mighty protest against this theory.

WHAT THE PASSAGE MEANS.

It seems to me that the apostle wrote to, "elect pilgrims of dispersion, of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia," in order to instruct, strengthen and encourage to faithful holding

out, those who were unhappily surrounded, who were, probably, suffering severe persecutions, and possibly, in many cases, death on account of their profession, and were, therefore in great danger of falling away. That this view is well sustained by the Epistle itself is seen if we read the following in their connections: 1 Pet. 1: 6, 7; 3: 14, 17, 18; 4: 1, 2, 16, 17 and 5: 8-10, etc.

In these passages the apostle teaches them that they should be careful to be in the right, that those in the line of duty to God and their fellows were safest. Not that those in the right should, in no case, suffer wrongfully at the hands of wicked, unreasonable men; still, in the long run, to do right is the best policy.

He exhorts them to be intelligent so as to be able to give, to every one who might ask them questions concerning their faith, a reason for their hope.

Reason underlies faith, faith is the ground of hope, and hope is essential to steadfastness to the end, especially when in the midst of persecutions. This golden chain of heavenly truth must not be broken; it must have no "missing link," else ruin must ensue. To maintain their Christian integrity was their duty to God, and their safest course among men. In thus living they would have good consciences and would, therefore, make manifest such uprightness and purity of life that those who accused them falsely or persecuted them wrongfully might be ashamed.

Every malefactor, when he comes to see that he has wronged a good, pure person, is sure to be conscience-smitten, and hence ashamed, (see 3: 11-16). But after all possible faithfulness, it sometimes comes to pass that a man of God suffers persecution. The apostle adds, that if they must suffer, it is better that it should be for well doing than

for evil doing, because, 1. They would in that case have a good conscience; 2. They would have the best possible ground of hope to escape suffering; 3. They would thus secure to themselves God's approval, good providences and blessings here, and their eternal salvation hereafter.

Then, to nerve them for the worst, if the worst must come, he says, verse 18: "Because even Christ suffered once on account of sins, a righteous for unrighteous ones, that he might bring us to God." So, even if they were righteous and should suffer in a good cause, they were, in this respect like the Master. He suffered for sins which were not his own; nor did he shrink from the trial, for, though perfectly innocent, he would and did, for the sake of others who were sinners, give his life. *He suffered wholly on their account.* Now, they ought not, if need be they should suffer, to faint, or fall out by the way. There

is no influence greater over a man than that exerted by one who dies for him. There is no other argument for keeping these suffering pilgrim disciples in the way of the Lord to the end, so likely to be effective as the one here used. They were challenged by all the agonies of the cross to stand firm, unmovable, though called to suffer the extremest pains in the cause of their Lord. The apostle tells how, and how much, HE suffered for them, a just for unjust ones, in these words: "Having been, indeed, put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit." This signifies, I suppose, that in regard to his flesh he died, truly, but in respect to his Divine Spirit (or self) he made himself alive. See John 10: 18, where Jesus, speaking of his life, says: "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again," etc. They were then cited to an example of this Spirit's work. He says, as I understand him, that this

same Christ in or by his Spirit went, in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, and preached to that disobedient people. It was Christ who preached to them through Noah. The long-suffering of God was put to the test. He waited on them as long as the Divine philanthropy could possibly wait; Noah, or the Spirit of Christ which was in him, was, meantime, preaching to them and warning them to repent, as he told them of coming ruin. No doubt but that wicked people derided, scoffed at and persecuted righteous Noah from day to day, as a like people did righteous Lot in Sodom, "vexing his righteous soul daily." Still God remembered Noah. Though he suffered at the hands of wicked men, God was with him, and in the end saved him and his. This very Spirit that had charge of the case of Noah and his persecutors, and who saved the one and destroyed the other, has your

case, says Peter, in his hands. He will save you and he will destroy them. But Peter tells them, that as God was long-suffering then, not willing that any one should perish, but anxious that all might turn and be saved, so now he is suffering long, these wicked men, who were persecuting, in order that they should have every chance possible for being saved. Yet God remembers the cries of his children; he will save them and destroy their enemies.

He alludes to their salvation from sin through Jesus Christ as having, in some respect, a parallel in the salvation of Noah and his family through water. Now, as Noah, who suffered long for a wicked, persecuting people and preached to them all the while, was saved gloriously by the hand of God, so Jesus Christ, who suffered long for sinners, "is now on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven." 1 Pet. 3: 22.

In the first of the fourth chapter he makes the application of his argument to them. He says: "For as much, then, as Christ suffered in flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind." That is, nerve yourselves to the duty of suffering, if need be, as Christ your Savior suffered for you. Thus Christ's sufferings for them is offered as a stimulant to induce them to gird up the loins of their minds that they might be able to endure hardness as good soldiers, even to the bitter end.

Again he says: "For he that has suffered in flesh (has died) has ceased from sin." That is, as one who has died is beyond the reach of sinful men, so he who has died to sin ought not to live the time remaining of his life in the flesh according to the lusts of men, but according to the will of God. For their lives, up to the time of their death to sin, should be considered enough in the practice of wickedness, etc., see

verses 3, 4. The apostle, then, speaking of their wicked persecutors, says: "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead?" Thus he brings the parties to the judgment day that they might receive their deserts according to their deeds done in the body (verse 6). "For, for this purpose was the Gospel preached even to the dead, that they might, indeed, be judged according to men in flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

This verse has justly been regarded as of difficult interpretation. It might signify that the Gospel was preached to the literally dead *before* they died, or to them *after* they died, or that it was preached to the spiritually dead while they were in the flesh. And again, the clauses, "might indeed be judged according to men in flesh," "but live according to God in spirit," are not at all free from obscurity. But,

remembering that the apostle's object was to encourage and strengthen those who were liable to fall, some of whom were no doubt then falling away on account of severe persecutions, with which hypothesis the interpretation of this verse must harmonize, his meaning may, I think, be gotten to a high degree of probability. "Was preached even to the dead." I suppose the apostle refers to those who were at that time literally dead; some of whom had died at the hands of their wicked persecutors, no doubt, and who were, therefore, examples of the most that wicked men could do against God's suffering children. One object of the Gospel's being preached to them was to confirm them in the faith, so that, though they should be judged, according to the will of men under the dominion of the flesh, to be worthy of death, yet that they should live according to the will of God in spirit. Men who

had suffered death at the hands of wicked ones, and had endured to the end, were examples of what the preaching of the Gospel could do in inducing the disciples to live according to the will of God, in spirit. Those addressed had, no doubt, seen many examples of heroic suffering, and even death, who endured as seeing him who is invisible; who, like the ancients, "saw the promises afar off and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; who, like Moses, chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches," etc.

See now how, in harmony with the view I have here submitted, the apostle closed his argument and exhortation with them. Read from 5: 6-11, viz: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your

anxiety upon him, because he cares for you. Be sober, be watchful: your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour: whom withstand steadfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being accomplished in your brethren who are in the world. And the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that you have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you. To him *be* the dominion forever and ever. Amen."

On the hypothesis that the Gospel was preached to those who were literally dead at the time the preaching was done, 1. It is not apparent to me why the apostle did not plainly say so, which he did not do. 2. I do not see what great present help such preaching would have been to those living, suffering ones, whom the apostle was addressing. If it be said that the

promise of having the Gospel preached to one in the future world, if only he should be about to conclude not to obey it in this, would be a source of consolation and strength, my reply is: *it is impossible that it could be so.* No one can, in sincerity, comfort himself with the idea that he will enjoy his life of sinning, on and on for some years, with the honest purpose that at some future time he would truly repent of all his sins, this one of delaying to do right, included. Equally impossible is it that one can be nerved or assisted to hold out faithful, under persecutions, by the promise of having the Gospel preached to him after death. The influence of such a proposal would, it seems to me, be quite the other way.

If, now, the Scriptures do not hold out the prospect that those who are not converted in this life will be evangelized in the next, it is obvious that there is no such hope set before us; and

if there be no such hope, then we may not expect that "moral evil" will have an end in that way.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WILL AS A FACTOR.

In the calculation to determine whether any given man or whether all men will be saved or not, there has not been consideration enough allowed for the factor—the human will. So far as I have been able to see, this factor is beyond the control of any and all outside parties and, therefore, nothing definite can be asserted, by any person, with perfect certainty, as to what one will do in any given case. It is certain that no man can forecast, with certainty, what another will do in the future. It is equally true that great numbers of persons are, everywhere and always, defying the counsels of God during their entire lives; and I do not see but that they may as probably continue to do so "to all eternity" as

that they certainly do so here and now.

There was a time, not long past, when very learned, wise and good men believed that God did *all* in the salvation of the soul; that man had no important or necessary thing or part to perform; that doing, on the sinner's part, is a deadly thing; that God can save any soul that he wishes to save, whenever he wishes to save it. Hence, in meetings held with special reference to the conversion of sinners, a large part of the exercises consisted in efforts made to *induce God* to "*save* these souls, *now*."

It seems to me the better view is, that God can save no soul from sin or death except as that soul may, of its own volition, decide for salvation, and that in inducing that soul to decide for salvation or eternal life neither God nor man can employ any force except that of moral suasion. That is, after the reason, the motives and the author-

ity of God in their fullness have been exhausted to turn the sinner, he *may* still not be turned, and, often he is not turned. No forces other or beyond these can be employed for the purpose, and these forces often fail to accomplish the object. Why is this? It will not do to say that it is because, though God could have done more than he has, he would not.

The *will* of God, as to the salvation of men, is not limited. Reason so teaches and God so declares. Jesus says: "You will not come to me that ye might have life." God says: "Because I have called and ye refused." "Who wills that all men be saved and come to an acquaintance with truth." It is in these passages and in many others made clear that God's *will* for salvation is limitless.

2. But the *power* of God for salvation is limited. Whenever God comes to the door of one's soul to convert it or

to bestow any blessing upon it, whatever, he is compelled to *knock* for admission, to ask permission to enter; otherwise he is barred out, it may be barred out forever. If he should break in upon the soul, "whether or not," *vi et armis*, it would be because he is not God or because man is not man; that is, God, in that case, would deny himself, a thing which he says he cannot do.

The preacher's business, in the matter of converting the sinner, is: to reason with him in order that he may believe, to speak to his heart that he may repent, and to command him in the name of the Lord Jesus to obey him whom he believes and loves; that is to submit his will to the will of God, formally.

In all places and at all times, where the Gospel and a Gospel ministry are, the work of trying to save men is being attempted. In some cases attempts

are successful, in many they are failures. Why these failures? It is certainly not because man's power is greater than God's. Nor is it because the will of man is mightier than the will of God. It is because God chose, in the creation of man, to make him with a will that might successfully set at naught the will of God. It is this, especially, that makes man like God—in his image; it is this, especially, that characterizes man as such. God is omnipotent over matter; over mind, heart, will, he is not.

If God could convert a sinner simply because he wished to, then all sinners will be saved, and that as soon as God wishes to save them. And, as God wishes to save all sinners, and wishes to save them now, it follows that he does save them now. They are now saved. This sweeping conclusion includes not only all sinners now on the earth, but all that have been on it and

that may yet be on it. Nay, it must include not only the living but the dead also. On this hypothesis, moral evil must come to an end. This is about intuitively certain.

Not only is it true, on the hypothesis that God can, and therefore will, save all persons always, that moral evil will have an end, but it follows also, *for the same reason*, that moral evil could never have begun. But, in fact, *it did begin*. Hence the hypothesis is false. Again, if God will certainly save all sinners, and thus put an end to moral evil, I do not see but that he must needs do so as soon as the sinner is a sinner. Why not? Why wait? If it be suggested that the sinner's opposition to God might operate as a hindrance, my reply would be: the hypothesis is, the sinner is not able to withstand God, and he is least able to do so at the *beginning* of his life of sin. So, on the theory of God's saving

any one in this world or the next by the use of any means or force other than such as he uses here and now, I think he would and must employ such and *all of such* forces, not only here in this world, but he must have done so the moment that sin was born, and crushed it at once. But he did not do this. Sin is here. Yes, millions of aching, bleeding, breaking hearts proclaim the solemn, awful reality.

God has ever been opposed to sin. He has expressed his disapprobation of it so often and so distinctly that there is no room left for doubt. From the opening act in the drama of sin's dreadful desolations among men to the final, "depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels," he adopted every word and employed every means possible in order to make manifest his uncompromising, irreconcilable opposition to sin. We have, in this panorama, a

view of sin for nearly six thousand years, and of God's dealings with sinners. His displeasure against it has had expressions of such marvelous emphasis as to leave no room to doubt but that God has done, is now doing and will ever do *all he can* to put an end to moral evil.

He has not converted all sinners; he has not made an end of sinning, for the reason I suppose, that he could not consistently do so; and what he can not consistently do, he can not do at all. The impassable barrier between God and the accomplishment of the salvation of men is the human will. Now, if we reason from what we know to ascertain what we do not know, the ground for believing that God will put an end to moral evil is not quite clear. It seems to me that the commission and the remission of sin are and should be placed upon the same ground. If sin is committed by him only who is will-

ing to sin; so sin is blotted out for him only who is willing to have it so. No power in Heaven, earth or perdition can cause or remove a sin without the consent of the will. In the face of this patent truth we read the reason why sin has an existence, and also why we may not prophesy, with any reasonable certainty, that it will have an end.

CHAPTER VIII.

TENDENCIES.

WHOEVER has carefully noted the tendencies or currents in the formation of character has observed that sinning is, at first, comparatively embarrassing and difficult; but, by oft repetition or long indulgence it becomes easier of performance, and to break away from it grows harder and harder. According to the law of habit, known to nearly everybody, it is certain that the evil doer who persists in his course of sin is constantly approaching a point beyond which he will have no power or even inclination to change. A great poet saw this and put it into verse, as follows:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen:
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

God has, himself, spoken with much plainness and great power on this subject. See 1 Tim. 2: 4, where Paul pictures the effect of departing from the faith, of giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons. They come, he says, to speak lies in hypocrisy and are seared in their conscience as with a hot iron. This shows how, beyond or nearly beyond the reach of moral suasion, those persons had gone. True, the apostle's purpose was to point out the cause of their ruin that others might fear. But the lesson in what he says is none the less clear and conclusive on that account. The same lesson is, I suppose, seen at Eph. 4: 17-19, where the apostle says of the Gentiles, that they "walk in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; who being past feeling, gave themselves

up to lasciviousnesss to work all uncleanness with greediness." This is a terrible record. It shows that those who had gained such an eminence of infamy as they had were past a "feeling sense" of their moral accountability to God. This being the case, the possibility of their final salvation was not at all probable, if it was not intended to substantially say it was impossible. If it was impossible, then moral evil will not, can not end. The impossibility of their being made to turn away from their sinning is suggested by the phrase, "past feeling." Moral sensibility was, in their case, gone. The sleep of moral death, that knows no waking, was upon them. Therefore they could not be renewed to repentance, and so moral evil does not end. I suppose God would be entirely willing to save them, if only they could and would come to repentance. But as repentance is impossible, so moral evil cannot end.

God, in Hosea 4: 17, seems to refer to Ephraim as so far gone in idolatry that his recovery was impossible, and therefore, he says, "Let him alone."

It is frequently the case that habits become so fixed that they cannot be changed. If this be true of the sinner, as I have said and tried to show, and as the Scriptures seem to teach; that is, that beyond a certain point it is not possible for him who has passed that point to repent, then, since if he does not repent his unhappiness must continue, it follows that moral evil may not be expected to end.

Though the sinner, unless he is pardoned, must suffer the full penalty of his sins, yet, says one, no penalty for a sin or sins committed by a finite being can have an endless duration. That is, it is held that no offense perpetrated by *man* deserves endless punishment; and, as God would not allow punishment to exceed, in duration or

severity, the deserts of the sinner, so, moral evil must come to an end.

Observe, on this theory of closing out moral evil, the evil doer is supposed to pay off, in suffering, the amount due for his sins. All debts being canceled, of course moral evil ceases. I have no reason to think, and there is no law going to show, that in God's court any amount of suffering compensate, for a corresponding sum of sin. No moral science known to me adopts the principle as sound in morals, and it is certainly not sound.

But, suppose the hypothesis, that so much suffering squares the account against the sinner for so much sinning, should be admitted, the question yet remains: How much suffering is required to satisfy the claims of justice in case of sin? Here *man* should be slow to speak. The wisest angel about the throne of God is, I suppose, hardly competent to speak with any degree of

certainty on this question. The one who drops a pebble into the ocean may see the ripple start, but he knows not the end; he does not, he cannot see to the limits, in time or space, of the physical effect of his act, if it has limits. The probabilities are that the act is, in its effects, eternal, unless God should, in the use of his omnipotent power, to that end so rule as to close out the effects. Certainly man cannot interpose to stop the consequences, nor can he know the end. May it not possibly be that a sin, even as a pebble, shall start a wave of moral evil that shall lash the shores of shoreless, endless eternity? While I do not feel competent to speak dogmatically or oracularly of the infinite and incomprehensible, still I believe that enough on this subject lies on this side of the line marking the limits of religious thought to justify me in saying that the effects of sin are eternal, unless God should stop

them by blotting them out, or forgiving the sinner; and this even God could not do, unless the sinner should first repent.

If the effects of a sinner's acts are eternal, as already said, is it not reason to suppose that the effect on the sinner himself is, like all the other effects of his acts, endless? I do not insist that the effects in such cases as we are considering are of the nature of punishment. They may be only a logical following or necessary sequence of effects upon causes. But, however this may be, our conclusion that moral evil does, probably, not end, follows.

2. But suppose the hypothesis in the foregoing section is incorrect. Suppose the consequences, to the sinner, of his deeds are not to be meted out to him on the principle of so much suffering for so much sin, but on the ground, rather, that after so much suffering, of the quantity of which necessary to

meet the demands of right in the case God only knows anything, the sinner will be well affected to such an extent that God sees that the effect, unhappy to the sinner, ought to cease, it will then cease. Thus, or somewhat thus, it is thought, or hoped, or imagined that moral evil will have an end. In this view of the case, it is not held that the sinner pays off his debt in suffering, but that God forgives him somewhat for some reason, and thus moral evil, or a balance of it after a while of suffering, is canceled, ends. But, does any one know that such reason will exist as to every one who shall go into the unseen unforgiven, as we know thousands do? If it should fail as to even one, then, moral evil may not, does not cease. No one knows certainly that, in fact, every one will be finally forgiven; the Bible does not say such will be the case, nor is it, as I see things, probable that the unrighteous dead will

furnish the opportunity or reasons, on which God *can* save all. Of course, God cannot save one here or hereafter unless he is brought to repentance. Whether there shall be influences in the next world sufficient to bring all those to repentance who could not be reclaimed by God's power for salvation in this life is more fully considered in a former chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

No one is, in this life, entirely satisfied with himself. No one, nothing, fully comprehends itself. One among the wisest of the Greeks said: "Know thyself," yet no one has ever succeeded fully in doing so. The achievements of learned men have been marvelous. Guided by reason man has traveled with the planets and comets; he has weighed and measured them, has counted and mapped them out, and set down and contemplated his task performed. He has brought some of the planets to his very door, as it were, and contemplated them as familiar acquaintances. By the aid of scientific instruments, his own inventions, he has reached for realms beyond, and in regard to many questions his conclu-

sions reached have been very comforting and also very wonderful. But as on he goes in space till miles are numbered by billions, his vision becomes dim, his reason trembles and totters, and as he is being lost amid the mazes and wonders of God's boundless universe of universes, he is led, he is forced to exclaim, "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!"

The wonders of God's works are not all above us. As the man of science, with his torch-lights, his inspiration and apparatus, proceeds downwards, revelations of God attesting his wisdom and power confront him everywhere. In these revelations, as in those from above him, God is made manifest. "The heavens declare the glory of God," and the earth is full of his glory. No one, it seems to me, can

feel so worshipful as the truly Christian scientist. He confronts and recognizes the mysterious, the marvelous, the miraculous at every step he takes in his investigations, upwards, downwards, on all sides, within and without. Right logically and right reverently he says:

> "There is a God, the whole creation cries;
> Supremely great, superlatively wise,
> Beyond conception, holy, good and just.
> Remember this, ye children of the dust."

In the beginning God said to our parents, Adam and Eve, take the earth with its tenantry, rule over it, subdue it. With his scientific lamp man has searched Nature's mysteries, has sought to know all of God's wonders. In a large degree he has found.

Where he failed to find to his satisfaction he has not surrendered, he has refused to stop. He is now knocking at the gates near to the North and South poles. At the uttermost point of

venture yet reached, he stands gazing and proposing no retreat. He thinks of flying through the air to the pole, of diving under the icebergs, or of plowing his way on the surface. "To the pole," is his watchword and he will not surrender. See the pole he is determined; "*he must.*" This barrier in nature to his progress, he is resolved to remove, or surmount, or subdue.

He already speaks his "*Good morning*" to his brother man thousands of miles away in an instant of time. He tried walking, horse-back riding, staging, steam-boating, and finally railroading. He is not satisfied; he must fly, and fly he will.

But man, like the ocean, has his boundary; thus far he may go, but not further, says nature, says God. It is about axiomatic that without certain data certain conclusions may not be reached. There are many places *in* and *on* the earth that we cannot see,

because we have no adequate means of reaching them. So there are many things in *nature*, terrestrial, supernal and infernal, that we may not hope to understand, from the fact that we have not the data necessary to reach a conclusion.

It has, no doubt, been observed that all persons who are skeptical in respect to the Christian religion have stumbled at the supernatural. The asserted or implied ground of this fact is that the skeptic, not being able to *see the ground* of the fact claimed to be supernatural, is bound to reject the fact as such, or to deny the character of the asserted fact. The suppressed major premise in this case is: Every thing for which my reason does not comprehend the grounds, including the *What*, and the *How* and the *Why*, is to be rejected.

But this view is absurd. Food makes muscle, bone, flesh, hair, skin, nails,

etc. We know these things are facts, but we do not, we cannot understand *all* of the *how* and the *why* of them. Water slakes thirst. This is a fact, and it is understood *as a fact* by the plainest mind. But who understands fully the *how* and the *why* of it?

The skeptic accepts the Bible as a historical book, only he does not believe the "fish story," that the sun stood "still upon Gibeon; and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon," nor that Jesus of Nazareth had a miraculous conception. But why does he not accept these statements of the Bible as readily as others as facts? Simply because he does not understand the *how* and the *why* of these asserted facts. But, as before said, the moment one states in full the major premise of this conclusion, the absurdity is manifest. The *how* and the *why*, or a large part, if not the larger part, of our knowledge are not understood fully.

The effort to be rid of the supernatural or the miraculous in religion is essentially skepticism or infidelity. Strip physical nature and the Bible of all marks, signs or evidences of the *supernatural*, and faith in God and hope of life and happiness beyond the grave are impossible. Level the possibilities of attaining the blessedness of heaven down to what *man* can do to that end, and hope is gone. The best, most learned, the smartest of men, do, in the presence of sickness and death, pale, tremble, fear and fail. No one has the power to banish disease and death, except He who gave life. He only who gave life in the beginning has the power to give eternal life. Therefore the supernatural, the superhuman, or *God-manifest*, being absent, we are without God, and hence we are without the possibility of hope of that which God only can give. Given, all evidence of the supernatural gone or

absent, and the poet's lines must be amended to read:

"There is (*no*) God, the whole creation cries;
Supremely great, superlatively wise," etc.

The fact that we are, perhaps, not able in all cases to draw the line, accurately, between the natural and the supernatural, is not proof that the supernatural does not exist, nor that it is not cognizable and demonstrable. Let me cite the case of the five loaves and the two small fishes. Jesus takes these in his hands, looks to God as the source of all good things; then he breaks and gives the people to eat. In a few minutes, of those provisions, five thousand men, besides women and children, are abundantly fed, and of the fragments twelve baskets full are taken up. That is, eight or ten thousand people are fed to the full, of five loaves and two small fishes, which is a supernatural event—God was in it; and then the fragments were greater in quantity than was all

the food at the beginning, which is the miracle intensified. It is not easy to *define* the supernatural so that it appears distinct from everything else, but it is not hard to see God in this event. The same is true in the case of the dead brought to life, the lame made to walk, the blind made to see, etc. These events did not take place by the power or cunning craftiness of men, nor by the operation of the so-called laws of nature. God was *necessarily* in these events; and to show this is and was the purpose of their occurring. These miracles, events which *demanded* or *required the conclusion that God was in them*, are God's certificates of verity. They are the *sign-manual* of the eternal. This being so, their necessity in God's revelations of himself, in his book of nature and in his book of grace, is evident. For otherwise, these productions could not be held as *necessarily* his. So long as they *might be* ascribed to other

sources or parties it cannot be believed that God is, certainly, their author. The surpassing or transcending of all that man can do, or that natural law can accomplish, may reasonably be expected and will certainly be found in a world or in a book that is to show that God is. Or, as we find these evidences in our world and in our book we may infer, with certainty, that they are from God.

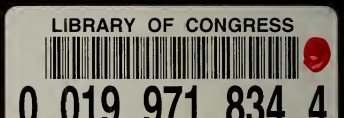
The astronomer searches the heavens, on and on; he finds at every step and turn the wonderful, the inexplicable, that "none by searching can find out God, can find out the Almighty to perfection." See Job 38 and 11: 7-10. Man is limited in his search, because he cannot comprehend what, to him, is incomprehensible. The geologist goes into the bowels of the earth, and at every step and on every hand he does and must logically exclaim: Surely the unknown and unknowable has

been here. So he would talk, if he were a skeptic or an agnostic; if he were a Christian he would say: Behold, God has been in this place. When one contemplates *himself* he finds the mysterious, the incomprehensible, at every step. He realizes what the Psalmist did when he exclaimed, "I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

The remarks of this section are made because, in the discussion of the subject of "Moral Evil," we seem to have been face to face, often, very often, with the inexplicable, the incomprehensible, the miraculous. This fact, to the mind of the unthinking, and to one unskilled in thinking, has the effect of leaving him unsatisfied. To him, here and there, a statement or an argument seems unsatisfactory, from the fact that at such points the subject

appears to not be fully comprehended.

But when it has come to be understood that one's works do and must carry *in* them or *on* them something of the qualities of the workman, it is not to be put to the discredit of a writer that he is not able fully to explain *all* the ways and works of the incomprehensible God.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